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No. 30.

SELECT NOVELS.

THE HERETIC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF

LAJÉCHNIKOFF.

BY

THOMAS B. SHAW, P.A.

OF CAMBRIDGE; ADJUNCT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE
IMPERIAL LYCEUM OF TSÁRSKOE SÉLO.

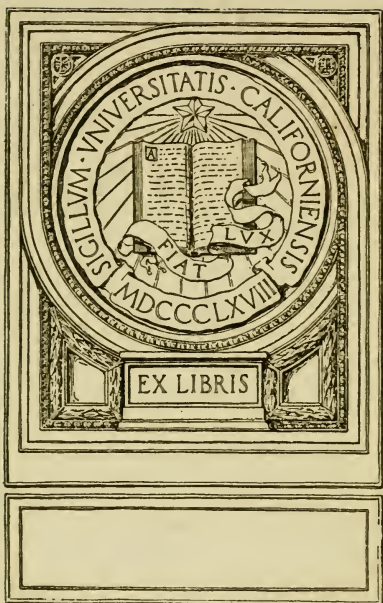
"Your blessing, O my brethren! while an ancient tale I tell."—*Sakhároff*.

NEW-YORK:

HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF-STREET.

1844.

Price One Shilling.



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THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

Or all the qualities which a work of fiction must possess, in order to excite and maintain the attention of the reader, the most indispensable is, undoubtedly—Novelty: without this seasoning of novelty, the most solid and nourishing literary fare will be pronounced insipid; with it, even what is unwholesome and pernicious, will go glibly down the throat of the public consumer.

In England, above other countries, is this demand for novelty felt and heard; there literary, like commercial industry, is so active, that the imagination of the supplier—whether author, artist, or cotton-printer—is kept on the rack to invent new patterns; or, to return to the culinary metaphor with which we began,

"Omne peractum est,
Et jan defecit, nostrum mare, dum gula sevit;
Reliquis addidit penitus scrutante macello
Proxima, nec patitur Tyrrenum crescere piscem."

The novelist appears to have exhausted most of the modes of existence, most of the historical epochs, most of the countries from which any materials for picturesque description, striking costume, or lively play of character, could be extracted—the genius of Scott has conquered almost as much of the romantic, as the creative soul of Shakspeare had before invaded of the dramatic world, leaving no room for inferior writers of fiction.

"To wear their sapphire crown,
And wield their little sceptres."

The East, too, that exhaustless reservoir of the marvels—that fountain abundant yet mysterious, like "the secret head of Nilus," whence so many, perhaps all the streams of fiction, ultimately derive, has been, if not drained, yet defiled by the foul urns that have too often of late been dipped into its waters. The Middle Ages have been, as we have said, occupied by the "Great Magician;" nothing, therefore, was left to reader and writer but to search for novelty—that Saint Graal of our modern chivalry, the chivalry of the pen—in the nooks and shady spaces of private life. Here a new vein was opened, but this, in its turn, was speedily exhausted; and the reader, after descending, by a gradual declension, from the lords and ladies of the once "fashionable" novel, has now "touched the very base string of humility," and revels in the sordid crimes and squalid miseries of the station-house, the alley, and the pawnbroker's shop.

We have said that, in this hunt after new scenes and new characters, the novelist has penetrated into every country: there is one remarkable exception. While the literature of every land has been laid under contribution, its history ransacked, and its manners daguerreotyped, one nation has apparently almost altogether escaped; and this a nation by no means inferior to many others in the wealth either of recollections of past ages, or the peculiarities of social and political constitution.

How happens it that Russia, an empire so gigantic in extent, and so important a member of the great European family—that Russia, with her reminiscences of two centuries and a half of Tartar dominion, of her long and bloody struggles with the Ottoman and the Pole—whose territories stretch almost from the arctic ice to the equator, and whose half Oriental diadem bears inscribed upon it such names as Peter and Catharine—should have been passed over as incapable of supplying rich materials for fiction and romance?

If the hundred nations which cover so vast a proportion of the globe, from the dwarfish hunter of the Yénisei to the tawny brigand of the Caucasus, could offer no peculiarities of manners, no wild superstitions, to gratify our ever-craving curiosity; assuredly the fierce domination of the Golden Horde, the plain of Poltava, the gray Kremlin of Mother Moscow, and the golden cupolas of Növgorod the Great, might be expected to afford something interesting.

It is, however, no less singular than true, that with the literature and manners of Russia, the English public is still totally unacquainted. Little has hitherto appeared in the way of translation from the Russian, save a few miserable scraps and extracts, the subjects as ill selected as the versions were feebly executed; some of these, indeed, were not made from the original language, but were manufactured from a wretched French *rechauffée* of an equally worthless German translation.

It is obvious, that the only mode by which we can hope to make the English public really well acquainted with

their brethren of the North, is to allow the latter to *speak for themselves*. Of the immense number of travellers whom *ennui* or curiosity sends forth every year from our shores to visit foreign countries, a very small proportion visits Russia; and this, for obvious reasons, consists chiefly of the rich and noble classes of society. A man of fortune, travelling "*en prince*," is not likely to take the trouble of acquiring a new and difficult language, solely for the purpose of studying the manners and feelings of the peasantry—a language, too, which he can dispense with; as for him it is possible to travel from one extremity of the empire to the other without knowing a single word of it. Besides this, Russian is emphatically the language of the lower classes, between which and the higher ranks a barrier is fixed, more insurmountable than one accustomed to the subdivisions of English society can conceive.

The great distances traversed by such a traveller, generally in a limited time; the prejudices and superstitions of the people; the habit, till of late years, universal among the higher classes, of using the French language as a medium of communication with each other—all this tends to increase the difficulty of a foreigner's attempt to make himself acquainted with the sentiments and character of the Russian people.

The literature of this country has often been reproached with its poverty; an accusation certainly true if a comparison be made between Russia and Western Europe, but considerably exaggerated. Comparatively poor it undeniably is: it contains, however much—both prose and poetry—that would possess novelty and high interest to the British reader.

The indulgent—nay, flattering—reception met with by the Translator in his first attempt to make his countrymen acquainted with the productions of the Northern Muse, has encouraged him to offer the present work in an English dress.

He was induced to select this romance for several reasons: it is the work of an author to whom all the critics have adjudged the praise of a perfect acquaintance with the epoch which he has chosen for the scene of his drama. Russian critics, some of whom have reproached M. La-jetchnikoff with certain faults of style, and in particular with innovations on orthography, have all united in conceding to him the merit of great historical accuracy—not only as regards the events and characters of his story, but even in the less important matters of costume, language, &c.

This degree of accuracy was not accidental: he prepared himself for his work by a careful study of all the ancient documents calculated to throw light upon the period which he desired to recall—a conscientious correctness, however, which may be pushed too far; for the original work is disfigured by a great number of obsolete words and expressions, as unintelligible to the modern Russian reader (unless he happened to be an antiquarian) as they would be to an Englishman. These the Translator has, as far as possible, got rid of, and has endeavoured to reduce the explanatory foot-notes—those "blundermarks," as they have been well styled—to as small a number as is consistent with clearness in the text.

As to the dialogue, it has been thought best, in order to preserve that air of antiquity—that precious *arugo* which gives value even to an insignificant coin—to employ that species of half Elizabethan dialect so happily adopted by Scott. It is not, perhaps, chronologically correct (nor, indeed, is it so, with some few exceptions, in the works of the Great Romancer), but it is sufficiently removed from the spoken English of the present day, to assist the reader in carrying back his imagination to a remote period. It is easily intelligible, and free from the air of pedantry with which the use of *real* old English—for instance, of the fifteenth century—would be chargeable.

The mode by which the Translator has essayed to obtain something like a true pronunciation of Russian names and words, will, he hopes, be found worth explanation. Most of the ordinary errors in this point arise, firstly, from the accent not being indicated, and, secondly, from the absurd and capricious manner in which we have adopted the French and German *versions* of the Russian orthography. Thus, for example, the names of Koutousoff and Souvóroff—names, one would think, of sufficient note to deserve a true pronunciation—have been transcribed into Cut-us-off and Suwarrow, and subjected to divers un-

seemly jests on their appearance when thus metamorphosed.

The French, whom their national self-complacency, and the peculiarity of their pronunciation, render of all nations the worst adapted to be faithful interpreters of sounds, employed, to express the sound of the Russian *v*, not their own *v*, which precisely resembles it, but borrowed from the Germans the letter *w*! Now, *w* is certainly pronounced by the Teutonic nations like our *v*, and is, therefore, well able to represent to a German the Russian letter in question; but, at the same time, the *w* is a consonant, of whose true sound the French have no idea. To add to this confusion, the English, whose pronunciation of the letter *v* differs from that of all other nations, have retained this French version of the German *Russ!* The consequence is, that a Russian name, pronounced by an English mouth, would often be unintelligible to the very owner of the appellation.

These errors have had the effect of causing what in themselves are sounds neither difficult nor inharmonious, to be regarded as something ludicrously complicated and unpronounceable:

"The skillful critic justly blames
Hard, tough, crank, guttural, harsh, stiff names."

In how many ways may we see the word *Voevóda* written? *Voiwode*, *Waywod*, and *Heaven* knows what besides! *Boyárin*, the ancient title of nobility in Russian, is occasionally *boyur* or *boyrd*—why there should be a *d* at the end of it, a Frenchman alone can tell: perhaps the error arose from some foreigner, ignorant of the language, supposing the plural, which is *boyare*, to be the singular, and thus perpetrating an error in a thousand varied forms.

It is surely time to correct some of these absurdities, trifling, indeed, in themselves, but to be deprecated when they serve to discourage the reader, and tend to render a noble and manly language unpopular.

On a former occasion we ventured to sketch out a kind of system for a nearer approach to a true pronunciation of Russian words; and we have found no reason to change the few and simple rules we then gave. We shall repeat them here: "The vowels, *a, e, i, o, y*, are supposed to be pronounced as in French; the diphthong *ou* as in the word *you*; the *f* always with the French *ou* as in the word *you*."

"With respect to the combinations of consonants, *kh* has the guttural sound of the *ch* in the Scottish word *loch*, and *gh* is rather like a rough or coarse aspirate.

"The simple *g* is invariably to be pronounced hard as in *gun* or *gall*.

"To avoid the possibility of error, the combination *tch*, though not a very soft one to the eye, represents a Russian letter for which there is no character in English; it is, of course, uttered as in the word *watch*.

"We have invariably indicated the syllable on which the stress or accent is to fall."

The epoch chosen by Lajetchnikoff is the fifteenth century; an age most powerfully interesting in the history of every country, and not less so in that of Russia. It was then that the spirit of inquiry, the thirst for new facts and investigations in religious, political, and physical philosophy, was at once stimulated and gratified by the most important discoveries that man had as yet made, and extended itself far beyond the limits of what was then civilized Europe, and spoke, by the powerful voice of Ioánn III., even to Russia, plunged as she then was in ignorance and superstition. Rude as are the outlines of this great sovereign's historical portrait, and rough as were the means by which he endeavoured to ameliorate his country, it is impossible to deny him a place among those rulers who have won the name of benefactors to their native land.

Though we cannot award to him the praise of the warrior, perhaps the very weakness which induced him to choose, as the instruments of his policy, rather the peaceful arts of the diplomatist than the barbarous violence of the sword—perhaps this defect, if defect it be, enabled him to give a more salutary direction to the infant energies of his country. He was not, it is true—

"One of those potent madmen, who keep all
Mankind awake, while they, by their great deeds,
Are drumming hard upon this hollow world,
Only to make a sound to last for ages!"

but in silence he prepared for the more lasting, if less brilliant, triumphs of civilization and internal improvement. It was by him that Russia—alternately deluged with blood, poured forth in obscure and fruitless conflicts, and slumbering in sullen exhaustion till its resources were again repaired for fresh struggles with internal and foreign foes—was instructed that in an imperfectly civilized country is nothing but a fantastic and dangerous meteor. He laid, as far as human sagacity could lay, the foundations of a solid and durable edifice—

"Is genus indecile, et disperum monibus alis,
Carnipouit, legesque dedit, Latumque vocari
Maluit."

That this edifice was so speedily to fall in ruins at his

death, that the foreign arts he planted, and so sedulously fostered in the snowy soil of the North, were to be withered by the flame of civil war, or to be devoured at the root by the secret worm of barbarism; that the code of laws—the *Soudebnik*—which he compiled, was so soon to be substantially if not formally abolished, was certainly more than mere human foresight could have anticipated. The ways of Providence are inscrutable. It can be no reproach to Ioánn's sagacity that he was unable to prophesy that his throne was, after a short interval, to be filled by one of those monsters whose atrocities almost defy the belief of succeeding ages, and which force us to have recourse to the hypothesis of their deeds being rather the symptoms of insanity, than the capricious extravagances of mere human tyranny.

With M. Lajetchnikoff's mode of treating the principal figure in his canvass—the stern yet not unattractive portrait of Ioánn—we think that none of his English readers will be disposed to find fault. The inferior personages in his drama are, for the most part, faithful sketches from the rude likenesses executed by the old chroniclers—those Albert Dürers of history, whose rugged but vigorous strokes often anticipate and surpass the more smooth and elaborate touches of succeeding artists.

Of Afánasii Nikitín it is necessary to mention that he is no fictitious character: his account of his wanderings over many lands, particularly the East, is still extant, and is a work of extreme interest, not only as being the production of the earliest Russian traveller, and curiously coloured by the peculiarities and prejudices of his age and nation, but as being, in fact, one of the earliest records of a traveller's journey in those remote countries. Some portions of this curious itinerary, M. Lajetchnikoff has not unskillfully interwoven in his romance.

None of our English readers who have visited Moscow will, we think, fail to find some interest in Fioravanti Aristotle, the architect of the cathedral in the Kremlin—a work still remaining in a perfect state of preservation; and remarkable, not only from the thousand associations attached to a building in which so many of the Russian Tsars have been crowned, but also as a specimen of style of architecture singularly interesting in itself, and the most striking examples of which are only to be found in Constantinople, in Venice, and in Russia.

With these brief remarks we shall conclude our introduction of M. Lajetchnikoff to the British public, leaving him, like Gines de Pasamonte, to draw up his curtain and set his puppets in motion. We flatter ourselves, that if the eloquence and spirit of his dialogue suffers in the hands of his interpreter, the substance of it has been rendered with fidelity.

The reader will remark in the mottoes prefixed to the chapters, and also frequently occurring in the body of the romance, short passages, sometimes with rhymed terminations, and an apparently irregular metrical arrangement, which he may, perhaps, take for unsuccessful attempts at rhyme. They are, however, the first essay hitherto made to give any idea in English of the tone and structure of the ancient national poetry of the Russian people. However irregular they may seem, they are verses, and are governed by a peculiar system of versification. Of their "metrical canons," it may be worth while to give some notion in this place.

They are not necessarily rhymed; indeed rhyme is, in many cases, held to be a defect. The principal thing necessary to please the Russian ear in this kind of composition, is a regular recurrence of accents. This the Translator has indicated by a mark placed over the syllable on which the stress is laid in singing; for they are essentially songs, and meant, like all poetry of a very ancient character, to be sung. Dr. Bowring, in his "Russian Anthology," has given versions of several specimens of these singular compositions; but without venturing to retain their metrical form—in our opinion, the most curious peculiarity they possess. We hope that our boldness, in attempting to give them both in dress and in substance, will be rewarded with approbation.

The only circumstance to which we think it necessary to call our reader's attention, is the frequent employment, in the dialogue, of phrases which have the sententious form, and frequently the jingle, of proverbs and old saws. As these, repeated from tradition, or invented *extempore*, colour, in a great measure, the ancient language of Russia, and are still very perceptible in the dialogue of the lower classes, the Translator has thought it his duty to retain them, however strange may be their effect to an English eye. They are national and characteristic, and have, at least, the merit of signifying something—an advantage not always possessed by the "be chesms," "mashalls," and "burnt fathers," so plentifully strewn over the pages of most modern "Oriental" novels.

THOMAS B. SHAW.

Tsarkoe Selo, August 19, 1843.

THE HERETIC.

PROLOGUE.

"With the blessing of God, rejoice and hail, our good Lord and Son, Great Prince Dmitrii Ivánovitch, of all Russia . . . many years!"—*Words of the Primate at the ceremony of the Coronation of Dmitrii Ivánovitch, grandson of Ioánn III., as Great Prince.*

It was the 27th of October, 1505. As if for the coronation of a Tsar, Moscow was decorated and adorned. The Cathedral of the Assumption, the Church of the Annunciation, the Stone Palace, the Tower Palace, the Kreml with its towers, a multitude of stone churches and houses, scattered over the city—all this, just come out of the hands of skilful architects, bore the stamp of freshness and newness, as if it had risen up in one day by an almighty will. In reality, all this had been created in a short time by the genius of Ioánn III. A person who, thirty years back, had left Moscow, poor, insignificant, resembling a large village, surrounded by hamlets, would not have recognized it, had he been seen it now; so soon had all Russia arisen at the single manly call of this great genius. Taking the colossal infant under his princely guardianship, he had torn off its swaddling bands, and not by years, but by hours, he reared it to a giant vigour. Nóvgorod and Pskoff, which had never valued their bonnet to mortal man, had yet doffed it to him, and had even brought him the tribute of liberty and gold: the yoke of the Khans had been cast off, and hurled beyond the frontiers of the Russian land; Kazán, though she had taken covert from the mighty hunter, yet had taken covert like the she-wolf that has no earth—her territories had melted away, and were united into one immense appanage; and the ruler who created all this was the first Russian sovereign who realized the idea of a Tsar.

Nevertheless, on the 27th of October 1505, the Moscow which he had thus adorned was preparing for a spectacle not joyful but melancholy. Ioánn, enfeebled in mind and body, lay upon his death-bed. He had forgotten his great exploits; he remembered only his sins, and repented of them.

It was towards the evening-tide. In the churches gleamed the lonely lamps; through the mica and bladder panes of the windows glimmered the fires, kindled in their houses by faith or by necessity. But nowhere was it popular love which had lighted them; for the people did not comprehend the services of the great man, and loved him not for his innovations. At one corner of the prison, the Black Izbá,* but later than the other houses, was illumined by a weak and flickering light. On the bladder, which was the substitute for glass in the win-

dow, the iron grating, with its spikes, threw a net-like shadow, which was only relieved by a speck, at one moment glittering like a spark, at another emitting a whirling stream of vapour. It was evident that the prisoner had made this opening in the bladder, in order, unperceived by his guards, to look forth upon the light of heaven.

This was part of the prison, and in it even now was pining a youthful captive. He seemed not more than twenty. So young! What early transgression could have brought him here? From his face you would not believe in such transgressions; you would not believe that God could have created that fair aspect to deceive. So handsome and so noble, that you would think, never had one evil intention passed over that tranquil brow, never had one passion played in those eyes, filled with love to his neighbour and calm melancholy. And yet by his tall, majestic figure, as he starts from his reverie, and shakes his raven curls, he seems to be born a lord, and not a slave. His hands are white and delicate as a woman's. On the throat of his shirt blazes a button of emerald; in the damp and smoky izbá, on a broad bench against the wall, are a feather-bed with a pillow of damask, and with a silken covering; and by the bedside a coffer of white bone in filigree work. Evidently this is no common prisoner. No common prisoner!—no, he is a crowned prince! . . . and pure in thought and deed as the dwellers of the skies. All his crime is a diadem, which he did not seek, and which was placed on his head by the caprice of his sovereign; in no treason, in no crime had he been accomplice; he was guilty by the guilt of others—by the ambition of two women, the intrigues of courtiers, the anger of his grandfather against others, and not against him. They had destined him a throne, and they had dragged him to a dungeon. He understood not why they crowned him, and now he understands not why they deprived him of liberty—of the light of heaven—of all that they deny not even to the meanest. For him his nearest kinsman dared not even pray aloud.

This was the grandson of Iván III., the only child of his beloved son—Dmitrii Ivánovitch.

At one time he sat in melancholy musing, resting his elbows on his knees, and losing his fingers in the dark curls of his hair; then he would arise, then lie down. He was restless as though they had given him poison. No one was with him. A solitary taper lighted up his miserable abode. The stillness of the izbá was disturbed only by the drops from the ceiling, or the mice nibbling the crumbs that had fallen from the captive's table. The little light now died away, now flared up again; and in these flashes it seemed as though rows of gigantic

* *Izbá*—properly a coitage built of logs laid horizontally on one another, but anciently employed, generally, in the sense of "house." "Black Izbá"—a dwelling of the meanest kind; so called from the absence of a chimney rendering the walls black with smoke.—T. B. S.

spiders crept along the wall. In reality, these were scribblings in various languages, scrawled with charcoal or with a nail. Hardly was it possible to spell out among them—"Matheas," "Marpha, posádnitza of Nóvgorod the Great," "Accursed be" . . . "liebe Mutter, liebe A" . . . ; and still several words more, half obliterated by the damp which had trickled along the wall, or been scratched out by the anger or the ignorance of the guards.

The door of the dungeon softly opened. Dmitrii Ivánovitch started up. "Aphónia, is it thou?" he joyfully enquired; but seeing that he had mistaken for another the person who entered, he exclaimed sadly—"Ah, it is thou, Nebogátii! Why comest not Aphónia? I am sad, I am lonely, I am devoured by grief, as if a serpent lay at my heart. Didst thou not say that Aphónia would come as soon as they lighted the candles in the houses?"

"Aphánasii Nikítin hath a mind as single as his eye," said the deacon Dmitrii Nebogátii, a kind and good-natured officer, yet strict in the performance of the charge given him by the Great Prince, of guarding his grandson. (We may remark, that at this time he, in consequence of the illness of Dmitrii, the treasurer and groom of the bedchamber, fulfilled their duties. All honour to a prince, even though he be a prisoner!)

"Make thyself easy, Dmitrii Ivánovitch; soon, be sure, will come our orator. Thou wottest thyself he groweth infirm, he seeth not well, and so must grope along the wall; and till he cometh, my dear child, play, amuse thyself with thy toys. Sit down cozily on thy bed; I will give thee thy coffer."

And Dmitrii Ivánovitch, a child, though he was more than twenty years old, to escape from the weariness that oppressed him, instantly accepted the proposition of his deacon, sat down with his feet on his bed, took the ivory box upon his knees, and opened it with a key that hung at his girdle. By degrees, one after the other, he drew out into the light a number of precious articles which had been imprisoned in the coffer.

The young prince held up to the fire, now a chain of gold with bears' heads carved on the links, or a girdle of scaly gold, then signet-rings of jacinth or emerald, then crucifixes, collars, bracelets, precious studs: he admired them, threw the collars round his neck, and asked the deacon whether they became him; took orient pearls and rubies by the handful, let them stream like rain through his fingers, amused himself in playing with them, like an absolute child—and suddenly, hearing a voice in the neighbouring chamber, threw them all back any how into the coffer. His face lighted up.

"'Tis Aphónia!" he cried, giving back the box to the deacon, and descending from the bed.

"Lock it, Dmitrii Ivánovitch," said Nebogátii firmly; "without that I will not receive it."

Hastily clinked the key in the coffer; the door opened, and there entered the izhá an old man of low stature, bowed down by the burden of years; the silver of his hair was already becoming golden with age. From the top of his head to the corner of his left eye was deeply gashed a scar, which had thus let fall an eter-

nal curtain before that eye, and therefore the other was fixed in its place, like a precious stone of wondrous water, for it glittered with unusual brilliancy, and seemed to see for itself and for its unfortunate twin brother. No son more affectionately meets a tenderly beloved father, than Dmitrii Ivánovitch met the old man. Joy sparkled in the eyes of the Tsarévitch, and spoke in his every gesture. He took his guest's walking-staff, shook from his dress the powdered snow, embraced him, and seated him in the place of honour on his bed. Nevertheless, the guest was no more than Aphánasii Nikítin, a merchant of Tver, a trader without trade, without money, poor, but rich in knowledge, which he had acquired in an adventurous journey to India, rich in experience and fancies, which he knew how to adorn beside with a sweet and enchanting eloquence. He lived on the charity of his friends, and yet was no man's debtor: the rich he paid with his tales, and to the poor he gave them for nothing. He was allowed to visit the Great Prince Dmitrii Ivánovitch, (whom, however, it was forbidden to call Great Prince.) We may judge how delightfully he filled up the dreadful solitude of the youth's imprisonment, and how dear he therefore was to the captive. And what did Dmitrii give him for his labour? Much, very much to a good heart,—his delight, the only pleasure left him in the world—and this reward the Tveritchánin* would not have exchanged for gold. Once the Tsarévitch had desired to present him with one of the precious articles from his ivory box; but the deacon gently reminded the captive, that all the articles in his coffer were his, that he might play with them as much as he pleased, but that he was not at liberty to dispose of them.

The day before Aphánasii Nikítin had begun a tale about the "*Almayne*," surnamed the *Heretic*. To-day, when he had seated himself, he continued it. His speech flowed on like the song of the nightingale, which we listen to from the flush of morning till the glow of eve, without shutting our eyes even for a moment. Greedily did the Tsarévitch listen to the story-teller, his cheeks burned, and often tears streamed from his eyes. Far, very far he was borne away from his dungeon, and only from time to time the rude bawling of the guards behind the partition-wall recalled him to bitter reality. In the mean time the deacon Nebogátii's pen was hurriedly scratching along the parchment: the sheets, pasted one to another in a long line, were fast covered with strange hieroglyphics, and wound up into a huge roll. He was writing down from Aphánasii Nikítin's mouth, *A tale touching a certayne Almayne, surnamed the Heretic*.

Suddenly, in the midst of the tale, there rushed into the dungeon the dvorétzkií of the Great Prince. "Iván Vassílievitch is about to render up his soul to God," said he, hastily; "he grieveth much about thee, and hath sent for thee. Make haste!"

The prince was convulsively agitated. Over his face, which became white as a sheet, passed

* In Russia, designations of persons from their native country have the termination *in*; as, Anglichánin, an Englishman; Tveritchánin, a native of Tver.

† *Dvorétzkií*—a great officer of the palace (*dvorétz*) in the court of the ancient Tsars.

some thought; it flashed in his eyes. Oh, this was a thought of paradise! Freedom . . . a crown . . . the people . . . mercy . . . perhaps a block . . . what was there not in that thought? The captive—the child who had just been playing with jewels—arose the Great Prince of all Russia.

Iván was still a sovereign, though on his dying bed; death had not yet locked for ever his lips, and those lips might yet determine on his successor. The thoughts of another life, remorse, an interview with his grandson, whom he had himself of his own free-will crowned Tsar, and whom they had just brought from a dungeon—what force must these thoughts have on the will of the dying man!

They gave the prince his bonnet, and just as he stood, conducted by the deacon and other officers, he hastened to the Great Prince's palace. In the hall he encountered the sobbing of the kinsmen and servants of the Tsar. "It is over!—my grandsire is dead!" thought he, and his heart sank within him, his steps tottered.

The appearance of Dmítrii Ivánovitch in the palace of the Great Prince, interrupted for a time the general lamentation, real or feigned. The unexpectedness, the novelty of the object, the strange fate of the prince, pity, the thought that he, perhaps, would be the sovereign of Russia in a moment, overwhelmed the minds and hearts of the courtiers. But even at this period there were among the long-beards some wise heads: acute, far-sighted calculations, which we now call politics, were then as now oracles of fate, and though sometimes, as happens even in our own days, they were overthrown by the mighty hand of Providence.

These calculations triumphed over the momentary astonishment; the tears and sobbing began again, and were communicated to the crowd. Only one voice, amidst the expressions of simulated woe, ventured to raise itself above them: "Haste, my lord, our native prince—thou hast been sent for no short time—Iván Vassfliévitch is yet alive—the Lord bless thee, and make thee our Great Prince!"

This voice reassured the youth; but when he was about to enter the bed-chamber where the dying man lay, his strength began to fail. The door opened; his feet seemed nailed to the threshold. Iván had only a few minutes left to live. It seemed as if death awaited only the arrival of his grandson, to give him his dismissal. Around his bed stood his sons, the primate, his favourite boyárens, his kinsmen.

"Hither—to me, Dmítrii—my dear grandson," said the Great Prince, recognising him through the mists of death.

Dmítrii Ivánovitch threw himself towards the bed, fell upon his knees, kissed the cold hand of his grandsire, and bedewed it with his tears. The dying man, as if by the power of galvanism, raised himself, laid one hand on his grandson's head, with the other blessed him, then spoke in a breathless voice: "I have sinned before God and thee . . . Forgive me . . . forgive . . . The Lord and I have crowned thee . . . be . . . my . . ."

The face of Vassflii Ioánnovitch was convulsed with envy and fear. Yet one word more . . .

But death then stood on the side of the strong-

est, and that word was never pronounced in this world. The Great Prince Iván Vassfliévitch yielded up his last breath, applying his cold lips to the forehead of his grandson. His son, who had been earlier designated by him as his heir, immediately entered into all his rights. They tore Dmítrii from the death-bed, led him out of the Great Prince's palace, and conducted him back to his dungeon. There, stretched on his bed, was reposing Aphónia in the deep slumber of the just. Having bewailed his woes, the ill-fated Dmítrii lay down beside the old man. Prince and peasant were there equal. The one dreamed that night of royal banquets, and of a glorious crown, glittering like fire, upon his head, and of giving audience to foreign ambassadors, and reviewing vast armies. The other—of the hospitable palm and the rivulet in the deserts of Arabia. The poor man awaked the first, and how was he surprised to find the Tsarévitch by his side! Mournfully he shook his hoary head, and wept, and was about to bless him, when he heard the joyful gallant cry of Dmítrii Ivánovitch, as he dreamed—"Warriors! . . . on the Tartars! . . . on Lithuania! . . ."

And immediately awoke the young prince. Long he rubbed his eyes, and gazed around him, and then, falling on Aphónia's bosom, he melted into tears. "Ah! father, father, I have been dreaming" . . .

His words were strangled by sobs.

Soon all that he had seen and heard in the palace of the Great Prince began to appear to him as a dream. Only when he recalled to his memory that weary vision, he felt on his forehead the icy seal which had been placed on it by the lips of the dying Tsar.

The winter came: all was as before in the Black Izhá: nothing but the decorations of the scene had changed: the uniform sound of the falling drops was dumb, the bright speck had vanished from the bladder window-pane: instead, a silvery film of frost adhered to the corners of the walls and the crevices of the ceiling, and the bright speck, through which the captive could see the heavens, with their sun and free birds, was veiled with a thick patch. But Aphónia, as of old, visited the dungeon. He had finished his tale of the Almayne, whom they called the Heretic, and the scribe Nebogátii, putting it on paper word for word, had placed the roll in his iron chest—an amusement for his descendants.

Thus passed a little more than three years.

The royal prisoner was no longer in his dungeon, and Aphánasii Nikítin was seen no more within it. Assuredly Dmítrii Ivánovitch had been set at liberty. Yes, the Lord had set him free from all earthly bonds. Thus writes an annalist: "In the year 1509, on the 14th of February, departed this life the Great Prince Dmítrii Ivánovitch, in prison." Gerberstein adds: "It is thought that he was starved—with cold or with hunger—to death, or stifled with smoke."

This prologue requires explanation. Here it is: In the year 1834, in the government of S—, were put up to auction the estates of one of Catharine's great nobles. A rich old library, in which (as I was assured by credible

people) were to be found historical treasures, was sold in detail to any body who chose to bid. Hastening to the spot, I threw myself upon the plunderers, in order, by force of gold, to snatch from them some rarity which they could not appreciate. Vain hope! I was too late. A great part of the library, they told me for my consolation, had come into the possession of a butcher of S—, who was selling the books by the bale, by weight.* I rush to him, and receive for answer, that all the volumes are already sold to different people. "There are the remains," said he, pointing to a heap of bindings and worm-eaten rolls; "look them over, you may find something to your taste."

With trembling greediness I set to work: I bury myself in dust and scraps of paper . . . Here is nothing, there as much, further on trash! Again to search . . . again I plunged into them . . . Time flies. The butcher stares, and thinks me crazy . . . At last (O, my blessings upon his dwelling!) I unroll one worm-eaten MS., pushed aside by the forces of the literary empire to the very corner of the garret. The title is attractive—"A Tale tohyng a certayne Almayne, surnamed y^e Heretick." I read the text—a treasure! I turn over the ragged leaves with the caution of a surgical operator. In the heart of the roll is an Italian manuscript; in it the names are the same as in the Russian MS., with the addition of some new ones, for the greatest part those of foreigners: the hero of the story is the same in both. It was evidently written by a person contemporary and acquainted with him. The relation breathes a remarkable affection for him, and elevated sentiments. In the titlepage are only the words—"In memory of my friend Antonio." This I managed hastily to glance through in the strange archives of the butcher. I cannot conceal my rapture; and, in the heat of my joy, I offer the bearded shopkeeper the finest lot that he might pick out of my herd. The bargain is struck at once: I carry home the roll, trembling for its delicate existence; I turn over the leaves of the Russian MS., as if they were the petals of some rare flower ready to fall. Hardly do I succeed in rescuing from destruction the half of it. The Italian manuscript is in a sounder condition. Out of the two I have composed "The Tale of the Heretic," filling up from history the interstices produced by destructive time.

"A trick of the novelist!" cry, perhaps, some of my fair or gentle readers; "a trick to interest us the more in his production!"

Believe or not, my right worshipful sirs, and you, most dearest of the dear, perhaps most fairest, ladies;—say what you please, that I wrote this preface simply with the aim of presenting you with a picture of Moscow, re-edited and decorated by the great Iván—a picture which could not be introduced in my novel: I cannot refute you. You may say that I have done this, desiring to find a place somewhere for the romantic and interesting character of Dmitri Ivánovitch, which could not have found room in the first plan of the romance, already

* A fact! The news of this sacrifice reached even Moscow, and the bibliomanes of the capital entreated me to discover whether some historical rarities might not be found at the butcher's.—*Note of the Author.*

occupied by another personage; and in the second, it could find no room either;—you may add, that I, in consequence of this necessity, imagined the discovery of the manuscripts. Say just what you please: I cannot give you ocular demonstration; I am unable to prove on paper the justice of my deductions, and therefore I am innocently guilty—I am ready to undergo your judgment. What is to be done? It is not the first time that tale-tellers are accused of deception. Some one, I think, has said,—"If the deception resembles truth, and is liked, then the tale is very good." This is no subject for the researches of the historical police. Neither do I pretend to justify two or three anachronisms as to years, seasons of the year, or months, committed in filling up the intervals of the manuscripts. They were intentional—this is easy to be seen. To point them out in notes I considered superfluous: it is sufficient to turn to any history of Russia to discover—for instance, that the reduction of Tver took place in autumn, and not in summer; that such and such an event happened in different years; that the punishment of the heretics was at Nóvgorod, and not at Moscow. I leave it to children to seek out the voluntary and involuntary sins. Such anachronisms (remark, not in the customs, in the character of the time) I can never consider as transgressions in the historical novelist. He must follow rather the poetry of history than its chronology. His business is not to be the slave of dates; he ought to be faithful to the character of the epoch, and of the *dramatis personæ* which he has selected for representation. It is not his business to examine every trifle, to count over with servile minuteness every link in the chain of this epoch, or of the life of this character; that is the department of the historian and the biographer. The mission of the historical novelist is to select from them the most brilliant, the most interesting events, which are connected with the chief personage of his story, and to concentrate them into one poetic moment of his romance. Is it necessary to say that this moment ought to be pervaded by a leading idea? . . . Thus I understand the duties of the historical novelist. Whether I have fulfilled them, is quite another question.

CHAPTER I.

IN BOHEMIA.

"O, it swelled ever luringly
O'er the meads, the spring rivulet!
And it bore away, lured away,
The fair baby from its mother's arms.
She was left alone, that mother sad,
On the steep bank, the dark-red bank;
She will cry aloud, O, so mournfully!
O return to me, darling one!
O return, my beloved one!"

Old Song.

Do you know, gentle reader, where the White Mountain is? If you do not, I will tell you: it is in Bohemia, near the frontiers of Saxony. Thither I will now convey you.

There, at no great distance from the mountain, loomed, through the grey twilight of an autumnal evening, a tower on the bank of the Elbe: it was newly washed in a shower which had just cleared off. From two windows, or

rather two narrow slits in the thick wall, glimmered a light, illuminating their small diamond panes, and throwing its dancing flash and shade far along the bosom of the river. 'Twas a wild night! Not a sparklet in the wide heavens—not a single streak of white to harbinging the dawn. The darkness looks immeasurable in its vast gloom—the night seems as though it would have no end. The blast appears to be struggling to force an entrance into the tower, and shrieks like an evil spirit as it wrestles with its time-worn battlements. The yelling of the wind is repeated by the long howl of the wolves in the surrounding thickets. The river, lashed by the blast, seems to bend its current sideways to the bank, and to besiege the foot of the tower, as though eager to batter it with its waves.

Within the tower all is still. Nothing is heard but the plaintive swelling and falling of the wind, fitfully playing with the bars of the window its wild and mournful harmonies. The large chamber is dimly lighted by a pile of wood blazing on the hearth; all around indicates simplicity, not to say poverty. Nothing is visible in the way of decorations but a number of elks' horns and weapons suspended upon the walls. With the head resting upon the back of a tall old chair, reclines the faded form of an aged woman, whose features, though bearing the livid traces of severe illness, and stamped by the track of sorrow and suffering, prove that in her youth she must have been lovely. Gloomy and painful thoughts from time to time appeared to chase each other across that face, and her soul seemed swelling with tears which hope or patience had retained within their source. The old woman was evidently the mistress of the tower—a tower that had once been a castle. At some distance from her is placed a hoary-headed old man, her retainer, seneschal, castellan; one of those figures which it is impossible to gaze at without becoming better and more benevolent—without feeling yourself elevated nearer to heaven. Where such old men dwell, there, we may be assured, dwells God's blessing. At one moment, seated on a three-legged stool, he struggles with drowsiness, then arises and proceeds to arrange the fire, then listens by the door. In the midst of the deep winter embodied in the faces of these two persons, has bloomed a vernal flower—a maiden of sixteen. By her dress, her place in the recess of the hall, we must take her for a servant. She sits spinning on a low bench, in the full blaze of the fire. On her pretty face, too, deep anxiety is expressed. At the least noise behind the door, her hands drop the thread, and her eyes turn enquiringly to the portal. Nothing breaks the stillness of the chamber but the low buzzing of the spinning-wheel, and the plaintive howl of the wind, imploring to be let in through the casement.

It is night, but the inhabitants of the poor castle do not sleep! They are evidently expecting some one.

Suddenly there rose the long note of a horn, and that seemed to be struggling with the blast. None heard it but the girl.—“Father,” she said, breaking her thread in her agitation, “Yakoubék is come.”

The retainer arose to his full height. The

old woman, raising her head from the back of her chair, lifted to heaven her eyes, which were full of tears. All was expectation in the chamber.

Again the horn sounded, but in a shriller and livelier tone than before; and this time it was plainly heard above the troubled blast. In tense anxiety was expressed on the faces of all. The girl's bosom seemed to heave.

“Why dost thou not show him a light, Yan?” said the old woman.

“I am stupified with joy, lady baroness,” replied the retainer, hastening to light at the fire the wick of an iron lamp, which the maiden had handed to him in the mean time. But the new-comer, it seemed, was no laggard. The door opened, and there entered the room a young man of twenty, good-looking and active. With a glance of love to the girl, a respectful obeisance to the Baroness Ehrenstein, (such was the name of the lady of the poor castle,) he threw his drenched hat and large wide-topped gloves at the feet of his beloved; and, unslinging the horn from his shoulders, he proceeded to unbuckle the buff-coat which defended his breast.

“Is all well?” enquired the baroness with a trembling voice; and, but for fear of degrading her birth, she would have cast herself on the neck of the messenger.

“God be praised, my gracious lady! God be praised! I bring a thousand salutations from my young master,” replied the new-comer; “but the night is as dark as a wolf's throat: you ride, and ride, and come full drive against a branch or a stump; and there are swarms of evil spirits in the cross roads of the White Mountain, where a traveller has lately been murdered. They try to get up behind you on your horse's crupper, and ride with you. One of them almost drove me right into the Elbe.”

The old retainer shook his head, intimating that the youth was talking nonsense.

“You should have said an ave to our Lady of Loretto,” interrupted the baroness.

“'Twas nought but an ave to our Lady that saved me from a ducking: but for your orders to come back with speed, I would have only accompanied my young master; and but (here he looked lovingly at the girl) for my desire to please you, by bringing you tidings of him, I would have slept at the last village. But rain, rain! it poured by buckets-full.”

“Poor Yakoubék! you must be drenched to the skin,” said the baroness: “warm yourself at the fire,” she was going to continue; but seeing him take from his bosom a neat folded paper, wrapped round with green silk, and sealed with wax, she could only exclaim—“A letter from him!”

With trembling hands she seized the missive, and pressed it to her withered bosom; then she gazed at it admiringly, and put it back into her breast.

Why did she not hasten to open the precious letter! Why! Because the baroness could not read. (Observe, this was at the end of the fifteenth century.)

Yakoubék then, with a joyful face, delivered to his mistress a well-crammed purse, for which he had been feeling all about his dress.

“Such a good young master!” said he, giving

up his charge: "he feared more on my account than for the money. Such a kind man! Yet he will not let himself be trampled on. How the knightly blood speaks in him, though he is le——"

Here Yan could no longer restrain himself; he twitched the speaker so sharply by the sleeve, that he made him bite his tongue. In the mean time, the baroness held the purse, and wept silently as she gazed on it. What a sad tale might have been read in those tears, if any one could have translated them into words! Then, recovering herself, she wiped her eyes, and began to question Yakoubék as to how her son had arrived at Lipetsk; for all her care was about him, what he had done there, how and with whom he had begun his journey.

Yakoubék only awaited these questions to let loose his tongue.

"We went on safe and sound," he began, "till we came to a pine-forest, as thick and dark as an old boar's bristles. Some ill-looking rascals showed us the white of their eyes; but we were in force, and could have given them as good as they brought, and we showed them nothing but our horses' tails. Then" . . .

The terrified baroness began to listen more eagerly.

"At a hostelry, a cursed hostess—and the she-cat was young too—gave us some ham, believe me, gracious lady, as rusty as the old helmets in the armory! My young master could not eat it, and swallowed a morsel of biscuit, washed down with water; but I was fool enough to take a mouthful of the ham, and even now the very recollection makes me" . . .

"Talk sense, Yakoubék," angrily interrupted the old retainer: "if you go on chattering such nonsense, your tale will be longer before it comes to an end than the Danube."

"Let the youth talk as he likes, whatever comes uppermost," said the baroness, to whom the least detraction about her beloved son were interesting.

"Thank ye, Master Yan!" cried the youth, confused, with a bow to the old retainer; many thanks for correcting a clown. But you lived in the time of the late baron" . . .

At the word "late," a slight quivering passed over the lips of the baroness. "You have lived in great cities; you have seen the Emperor and St. Stephen's church, and you are as chary of your words as if they were rose-nobles; but this is the first time since I was born that I have been to Lipetsk—ah, what a town!" Then recollecting himself, he shook his head, and waved his hand as if to drive away a fly. "But I am wasting foolish words, as if they were copper skillings: then, you see, gracious lady," he continued, turning to the old woman, "we got on prosperously; only on the road his honour did nothing but grieve for you, and was perpetually begging and enjoining me: 'Look ye, Yakoubék, serve my mother faithfully and zealously, as if you were her own children: if I get rich, I will not forget you. As to Yan,' he continued, 'I am not afraid about him; the old man, I am convinced, would lay down his life for her, (a tear sparkled on Yan's eyelashes, while a smile passed over his lips;) but you are young.' He always said 'you;' he must have meant . . . hm! if thou wilt let me speak Mas-

ter Yan; . . . then he bowed, looking very tenderly at the girl. Blushing like a crimson poppy, she pretended to be searching for something, rummaged about, and then quitted the room, as if to look for it.

"I can guess that riddle," said the baroness, in a kind voice: "Antony meant Lioubousha."

"My kind young master!" continued the youth; "he did not forget me . . . and on the road to Lipetsk, and when he was leaving, he advised me: 'Do not forget, Yakoubék. Tell my mother that I promised to marry you. My mother and our good Yan will certainly not refuse me.'"

"I have long ago given you my blessing, my good friends. What says the father?"

"I have no son; you shall be a son to me!" said the old man; "only I will not give you my blessing till you have told us all the news of our young lord without any additions about yourself."

Yakoubék almost leaped for joy: he ventured respectfully to kiss the baroness's hand; he kissed Yan on the shoulder, then assuming a grave air, as though he had mounted the cathedra, he continued his account of young Ehrenstein. "At Lipetsk we were expected—we!—I mean to say his honour . . . we reached the house. Lord! thought I, does not the king at least live here! Clap ten such towers as this in a row, they would not make such a house. If you look up at the chimneys, your hat falls off; if you go in, you lose your way, as if you were in an unknown forest. The rooms were ready. Soon after, the Muscovite ambassador came to my young lord, shook him by the hand, and spoke to him very affably. He said that his sovereignty would be very glad to receive his honour, young master, and would raise him to great favour, dignity, and wealth. My master hardly understood a word of what the ambassador said to him; it was all translated by an Italian who had lived in Muscovy. But I did not let slip a word, except now and then a hard one, not like our speech. The ambassador spoke something like Tchekh (Bohemian.) I thought to myself, perhaps he has learned Tchekh: but no! his servant spoke the same tongue as himself, so, thinks I, that must be Muscovite speech. Says the ambassador to young master: 'The Tchekhs and Muscovites are the sons of one mother, but have been divided by wars.' So, thinks I, I could easily turn interpreter" . . .

"Thou forgettest," interrupted Yan with a smile, "that an interpreter must understand the tongue of the person for whom he is translating. Dost thou see?"

"To be sure. What a blockhead I am! . . . For instance, the ox and the sheep want to speak together; I understand the sheep-language, and the sheep understand me: but I don't understand ox-language, and here we stick in the mud."

The baroness could not help smiling at this illustration.

"Well, well," said Yan, "first finish what you have to say about young master, and then you may go a wool-gathering as much as you please."

"Do not frighten yourself, Master Yan. Though I look aside now and then, I still stick to the young baron's skirts."

"Thou didst not call him Baron on the road?"

said the old woman with an anxious look. "That was strongly forbidden."

"I will not lie, gracious lady. Once my tongue did make a slip. I inadvertently disobeyed you. The word dropped from my tongue; but I corrected myself in a twinkling: 'Do not think,' said I to him, 'that I call you baron because you are one: I call you so because the Tchekhs and Germans call all their masters baron; I imitate them from habit. In the same way we call your mother baroness, as we love her.' No, no! I am no fool: when I fall into a scrape, I want no one else to help me out."

"Thanks, Yakoubék! well, what happened to you at Lipetsk?"

"Why, then they brought my young master a heap of skins of animals from the ambassador. Muscovite beasts, such as martens and squirrels—and they piled up a mountain of them in the room. All this was a kind of earnest from the Great Prince, the interpreter said. 'What are we to do with this?' said young master; but, before the words were out of his mouth, the merchants came flocking up like hungry wolves that have sniffed a carrion, and began to chaffer. After all, they laid a heap of gold and silver on the table, and took away the skins. My young master kept only a few; he has sent you a dozen martens, and bestowed a dozen squirrel-skins on me. 'These are for thy bride,' he said, 'for winter clothing.' Then came the driver, who was to take him—a Jew"

"A Jew!" exclaimed the baroness, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes to heaven. "Holy Virgin, shelter him beneath thy merciful protection! Angels of the Lord, drive far from him every evil spirit!"

"I myself did not much like that an unbelieving Jew should drive my young master; but, when matters were cleared up, my heart was relieved. The driver hardly looked at him, before he threw himself down and kissed the skirt of his mantle. 'Thou art my benefactor, my preserver,' he said. 'Dost thou not remember at Prague, when the schoolboys were setting savage dogs at me! Their fangs were in me; you threw yourself upon them, you killed them with your dagger, and chastised the boys. I can never forget your benevolence; when I do, may the God of Jacob and the God of Abraham forget me! In Moscow I have powerful friends, men of consequence. Speak but the word; I am at your service. Dost thou want money? Say—Zacharias, I want so much, and I will bring it to you. I will walk softly, I will not breathe, that they may not see, may not hear, that you had it from a Jew.' I understood not his words; I only saw the Jew beat his breast, and then again begin kissing the skirt of my lord's mantle; but young master afterwards translated it all to me word for word, that I might relate it to you. 'My mother will be less anxious when she hears this,' he said; 'I believe Zacharias, he will not deceive me. Besides, the ambassador answered for him: he is well known at Moscow, and all believe him to be an honest man. Through him, too, I can write to my mother.' At last they assembled for the journey: they were a great many going. There were all sorts of workmen," (a

slight blush passed over the face of the baroness,) "men who cast things in copper, and those who build stone churches; I could never tell you all. They took their seats on the carriages. I accompanied my master out of the town. He again repeated his injunctions to serve you faithfully, zealously, as he would serve you himself; and repeated this a hundred times. At a short distance from the town his carriage stopped. Then he condescended to embrace me. 'Will God let us meet again?' he said, and wept. His last words were all about you. The carriage went on—he still stood up in front, and long nodded his head, and waved his hand, as though begging me to salute you. I did not stir from my place; but he went—my dear master—went further and further, till he disappeared. I felt as if my heart would break. I longed to call him back, I longed to kiss his hand once more. He was gone! Had it not been for you and Lioubousha, with the blessing of God, I would not have remained here."

Yakoubék could not go on: tears prevented him from speaking. The mother sobbed; the retainer wept. One would have thought that all the three had just returned from the funeral of a dear friend. Long, almost all night, did the inhabitants of the poor castle remain awake; long did they talk of the young Ehrenstein. At length the baroness retired to her bed-chamber, ordering Yan to fetch Father Laurence to her in the morning. This was a deacon of the neighbouring Moravian brotherhood; the confidential reader of her correspondence. The morning came, and Father Laurence read to the baroness the following letter from her son:—

"Dearest Mother,

"I hasten to inform you that I am safely arrived at Lipetsk. I am well and happy—as happy as a son can be, separated from a mother whom he tenderly loves. Do not accuse me of being visionary. A love for science, for my fellow-creatures, and no less the hope of being useful to you, have induced me to take this step. You yourself have blessed my enterprise, kind, dearest mother!

"At Lipetsk the Russian ambassador was already awaiting us. He did not disappoint me; but gave me without delay the considerable sum which you will receive by Yakoubék. It is but for you that I value money—that I may comfort your old age. The favour of the Muscovite king, which his envoy gives me the hope of obtaining, will enable me to be still more useful to you hereafter.

"With what pleasure did I hear the first sounds of the Muscovite—or, as it is otherwise called Russian language! With still greater pleasure did I learn that it is related to our own. Already I comprehend a good deal of the conversation of the envoy with whom I am going. I am sorry that I do not understand Tchekkh better. I hope, at my arrival in Moscow, soon to learn to speak Russian; this will make my new acquaintance more disposed to love me. I already like them, as descended from the same race.

"As to the request which Yakoubék will make to you, grant it for my sake and for his.

"Prizing your parental blessing above all things, I prepare myself for my long journey;

that blessing, with your image, is in my heart. I kiss your hands a thousand times.—Your dutiful son,
"ANTONY EHRENSTEIN."

Many times was Father Laurence compelled to read this letter—each time it was bedewed with tears, and pressed to the mother's heart. The first days of separation were killing to her: every where she wandered about the former haunts of her beloved son, figuring to herself that she might meet him. The things that he had left behind him she gazed at with a kind of reverence: it was forbidden for any one to sit down in the chair that Antony had ordinarily used at dinner, or even to move it from its place. This was not permitted even to Father Laurence: a flower plucked by Antony on the last day before his departure was placed, like a holy thing, on the leaf of the manuscript Bible at which he had ceased reading. In his room all was allowed to remain in the same order as when he had left it. Sometimes the aged mother stole thither to sit on the dear wanderer's bed and weep. No complaint to Heaven—no repining: she followed him only with daily and nightly prayers for his health and happiness. But the wanderer was departing ever further and further; yet long he beheld the blue sky of his native land—that sky in which it was so delightful to plunge the soul; the mountains and rocks wildly and fantastically relieved against it; the silver spangling of the winding Elbe; the spiry poplars standing like sentinels of the shore; the flowery clusters of the wild cherry-trees, which peered boldly in at the windows of his chamber; oftener still he saw, in dream or reverie, the trembling withered hand of his mother stretched above him in benediction.

We know that Antony was the son of the Baroness Ehrenstein. We will say more:—his father was living, rich, powerful, occupying an important office at the court of the Emperor Fredrick III.; but at the poor castle, this is a secret known to none but old Yan and the baroness. The other inhabitants of the tower—Antony himself—considered him to be dead. But why so, wherefore, in what capacity, did young Antony go to Russia?

Antony was a physician.

The son of a baron a physician! . . . Strange! wonderful! How reconcile with his profession the pride of the German nobility of that day? To judge what the baron must have felt, we must remember that at this period physicians were for the most part Jews, those outcasts of humanity, those Pariahs of society. In our own time, and not far back, in enlightened countries they have begun to speak of them as men—they have begun to assign them a fixed station in the civic family; but how were they looked upon in the fifteenth century, when the Inquisition was established, burning them and the Moors by thousands? when even Christians were burned, quartered, strangled like dogs, for being Christians according to the theory of Wicliffe and of Huss, and not according to the canon of a Pius or a Sixtus? The rulers persecuted the Jews with fire, sword, and anathema; the populace, enraged against them by reports that they stole children and drank their blood on Easter-day, avenged on them one imaginary crime by real ones a hundred-fold greater.

They thought God's light, the air of heaven, defiled by their breath, their impure eyes; and hastened to rob them of God's light, of the air of heaven. Hangmen, armed with pincers and razors, even before the victims reached the place of execution, ripped and tore the skin from their bodies, and then threw them mangled into the fire. The spectators, without waiting till they were consumed, dragged the horrid remnants from the pile, and trailed the tatters of humanity through the streets, bloody and blackened, cursing over them. To prolong, if but for a time, their miserable existence, the Jews undertook the most difficult duties: to avoid Scylla, they threw themselves headlong into Charybdis. The profession of leech was then one of the most perilous: we may guess, that a great number of these involuntary physicians deceived many with their involuntary science, or were paid with interest for their cheats and ignorance. Did the patient depart into the other world?—they sent the physician after him. One example will suffice: it is a remarkable one. The leech Pietro Leoni of Spoleto, having exhausted all the resources of his art on the dying Lorenzo de' Medici, gave him as a last experiment a powder of pearls and precious stones. This did no good. Lorenzo the Magnificent started off for ever to that bourne, for which the non-magnificent also must set off. What became of Leoni? The friends of the defunct did not hesitate long: they killed the leech without delay, or, as others say, so tortured him, that he threw himself into a well, to avoid new agonies. How many, then, of these martyrs must have perished obscurely, not deserving the mention of the annalist? After all this, a non-Jew must have possessed great self-denial, and great devotion to science and humanity, to dedicate himself to the profession of medicine.

Judge, then, what the baron must have felt on seeing his son a leech.

How then, why, wherefore, did this come to pass?

CHAPTER II.

THE REVENGE.

" . . . If e'er my sleeping foe I found
By Ocean's dread abyss, I swear,
Nor then nor there my foot should spare
To spurn to death the accursed hound.
Unblenching, down into the sea
I'd hurl him in his mortal fear;
And his awakening agony—
I'd mock it with a joyous sneer!
And long his falling crash should be
A sweetest concord to mine ear."—POUSHKIN.

THEY were laying the foundations of a temple at Rome. . . . That this was a memorable day may be judged, when I say that they were laying the foundations of St. Peter's. On this day was fixed the corner-stone, the embryo of that wondrous structure; but half a century was yet to elapse before the genius of Bramante was to complete it. From all directions were crowding Italians and foreigners; many out of curiosity to witness a magnificent spectacle, some from duty, others from love for art, or religious feeling. The ceremony fully corresponded with the grandeur of its object; the Pope (Nicholas V., the founder of the Vatican library) had not

spared his treasures; a crowd of cardinals, dukes, princes, the successor of St. Peter in person, with his cortège, a legion of Condottieri, glittering with arms, pennons, oriflammes; flowers, gold, chanting—all this enveloped in steaming incense, as if it marched in clouds, presented a wondrous spectacle. But who could have imagined that a mere trifle had nearly destroyed the grandeur of this procession!

Into the crowd of distinguished foreigners, who surpassed each other in dress and stateliness, following the Pope's train at a short distance, had insinuated itself a little deformed figure of an Italian, habited in a modest cloak. This had the effect of a spot of dirt on the marble of a sculptor, a beggarly patch on a velvet toga, the jarring of a broken string in the midst of an harmonious concert. It seemed as if the abortion had mingled with that brilliant throng on purpose to revenge upon it his own deformity. The splendid young men around him began to whisper among themselves, and to cast sidelong glances at him, and by degrees to jostle him. The dwarf went on in silence. Then they began to enquire who was this insolent unknown, who had dared to spoil a cortège so carefully prepared; and they learned that he was a physician of Padua. "A leech! certes, a grand personage! . . . Some Jew!" At this moment divers pretty faces looked out of a window; one laughed archly, and another seemed to point with her finger at the train of young men. . . . Was this to be endured? The sidelong glances and grimaces began again; a cross-fire of mockery was poured forth; some trode on the dwarf's toes, others shouldered him: he, as though he was deaf, blind, or senseless, continued to advance. "He stinks of carrion!" said one: "Of barber's soap!" cried another. "I'll shave him with my doubled-edged razor!" added a third, menacing him with his sabre. "Metal is too noble for such rascaille!" said a stately young German who was next to the Italian; "the baton is good enough for him!" Then the figure clapped its little hand to its side as if to find a dagger, but it had no arms: from its tiny mouth burst forth the word "knecht!" probably because some of the German mercenaries were called *lanzknechts*. O, you should have seen what an effect this word produced on the young Teuton! A crimson flush mounted to his face, his lips quivered; with a vigorous hand he seized the little man by the collar, lifted him into the air, and hurled him out of the line of procession. This was done so rapidly, that nothing could be seen but arms and legs struggling for two or three instants in the air. Nought was heard but a whizz, then a fall on the pavement, and then—neither sigh nor motion. "Well done, Baron!" cried the athlete's companions, closing up the ranks, and laughing inaudibly as though nothing had happened. The unfortunate wretch who had been thrown to the dust with such gigantic force, was the Paduan doctor, Antonio Fioraventi. In that diminutive frame was manifested the highest intellect. All spoke of his learning, of the miracles which he had performed on the sick, of the goodness of his heart, of the disinterestedness of his character. But they knew not the greatness of his soul; for he never had been obliged to struggle with destiny or man.

Till then his life had been one uninterrupted success; learning, wealth, glory—all had been given to him, as though in compensation for the injustice of nature; and all this was concealed under the veil of an almost feminine modesty. On seeing him for the first time, it was almost impossible to avoid laughing at his diminutive, distorted figure; but at every succeeding interview he seemed to grow imperceptibly taller and less ugly in your eyes, so attractive were his intellect and his heart. Travelling in search of opportunity to exercise his humanity and science, he had only just arrived in Rome, and at his first step, as it were, across the threshold of the Eternal City, he made a most unhappy stumble. At the time of the procession, an indistinct but overwhelming impulse had carried him, without the sanction of his will, into the circle of the brilliant foreigners: how severely was his punishment for his absence of mind!

When he came to himself all was still and empty around him—only dark phantoms appeared to dance before his eyes; and among them the young German seemed to be trampling on him: his head was so heavy, his thoughts so confused, that he could hardly understand where he was. Re-assembling his ideas, he crawled to his lodging; but the image of his opponent followed him all the way. From this moment, that image never quitted Antonio Fioraventi; had he been a painter, he could at once have put him on canvass, he could have pointed him out among crowds of people; he would have known him at the end of a thousand years.

He passed some weeks in a violent fever: in his delirium he saw nothing but the German; at his recovery, the first object his mind could recall was the hated German. With returning strength grew the desire for revenge; his endowments, science, his wealth, his connexions, his life—he would have sacrificed all to this feeling. A thousand means, a thousand plans were thought of, by which to avenge his humiliation. Could those thoughts have been fulfilled, from them would have arisen a giant reaching to the sky. Antonio began to cherish his life, as we guard the sharp blade of the falchion when we make ready for the battle. To revenge—and then to throw his soul into the talons of the fiend, if it were not granted him to prostrate it before the throne of God! Thirty years had he fulfilled the commandment of the Lord, "Love thy neighbour as a brother"—thirty years had he strained along the path of heaven: and in a moment, Destiny had barred that path from him, and hung him over the abyss of hell. Had fate then the right to say—"Fall not!" There was *One*, whose head had not turned at the sight of that precipice; but he was not a man, he walked upon the waters as on dry land. Whose fault was it, if a common mortal could not keep from falling?

Thus said, within himself, Antonio Fioraventi; and sharpened in his soul the arms of vengeance. "To work!" said he at last, as soon as he was in a condition to leave the house. His search led him every where—to the court, to the high-road, to the temples and to the villas, to the library and the burial-ground. Often was he seen in secret conference with the doorkeepers, in friendly conversation with the police; high and low—every

thing was a good means, provided he could reach his aim. Under the sultry sky, in rain, in storm, he stood at the cross-roads, waiting for his German. Yes! he called him *his*, as though he had bought him for an incalculable price of vengeance. Every quarter, every house, was sifted to the bottom by his enquiries; Rome was stripped naked before him; and when he learned that his foe was no longer in Rome, he left the Eternal City, hurling back on it a curse for his farewell.

His enquiries, however, had not been entirely vain. He obtained a list of all the strangers who had come to Rome from different courts to be present at the founding of the church. Often did he read it over, and consider the various names contained in it; he learned them by heart—now to one, now to another name, as if by presentiment, did he affix the bloody mark—that mark for which he was ready to stake his own blood; and sometimes he swelled with pleasure, as if, in possessing this list, he was the master of those whose names composed it. What would he not have given for the magic power of calling them to his presence! . . . Oh! then he would have marked one of them with a different kind of blood-stroke!

Three, four years, perhaps even longer, did Antonio Fioraventi wander over Italy, seeking for his enemy; but in vain. It seemed as though, in the course of time, his desire for vengeance either disappeared altogether, or became more reasonable: he devoted himself again entirely to science—to make an important discovery in medicine—to acquire for himself a great name, an European glory;—this was the way he would avenge himself on his insulter. His portrait would be painted; the German would see it, would recognize it. "This," they would say, "is the portrait of the famous Antonio Fioraventi, that dwarfish leech whom the huge Teuton had so cruelly outraged." He would throw his glory in his enemy's teeth; this, too, would be a vengeance. O, such a vengeance would be a noble feeling! With faith in his own science, and a thirst for new knowledge, he visited the most famous learned institutions, and at length arrived at Augsburg. Here a report was soon abroad, that he could recall the dying to life, could raise them from the dead. They vaunted particularly his skill in the diseases of women, to which he had principally directed his attention. The physicians of Augsburg, in return for his counsels and secrets, hastened to accord him the chief place among them; they led him to the palace and to the cottage, for even to the latter he never refused to carry his skill and experience.

Once he was called in to the house of the Baron Ehrenstein. The baron, at the age of thirty, handsome, distinguished, and rich, had crowned these advantages by contracting an alliance with a distant relation of King Podibrad—a young lady of ravishing beauty; but it was neither ambition nor the honour of a royal relationship that confirmed this match. Passionate and devoted love had led the bridegroom and the bride to the marriage altar. Three years had passed, and the married pair, as though but newly betrothed, seemed as if they could neither see nor talk of each other enough, nor exhaust each other's ardent caresses.

Three years had thus passed like one unbroken honey-moon. At the beginning of the fourth, the baroness seemed about to offer her husband the first-fruits of their love. Long beforehand they had exhausted all tender cares, all the wonders of luxury, to receive into life and to cherish this spoiled child of fortune. Long beforehand the astrologers, of whom there were numbers at this period, had promised him beauty, fortune, valour, long life—every thing short of immortality. On one side hope, on the other interest and flattery, had woven over the cradle of the infant about to come into the world a canopy so brilliant, that heaven alone, with its innumerable stars, was to be compared with it. To the baron, the hope of becoming a father was superior to all the joys of earth, excepting the happiness of loving his dear and lovely wife, and of being beloved by her; and so the baroness prepared to lie in. All the periods of pregnancy were favourably concluded, and promised a similar result; but when the decisive moment arrived, the reverse occurred. Three days passed, and every day augmented her sufferings and her danger: we may judge how the baron felt during this time. The most skilful physicians were called in; they employed every means with which they were acquainted, but in vain: they gave her over. The unfortunate lady could no longer support her agony; she wished for death, and begged to see a priest. Ere the holy man arrived, one of the physicians advised Ehrenstein to call in the celebrated Italian Fioraventi, then recently arrived at Augsburg. "If he cannot save her," said the adviser, "she cannot be saved by man. The Italian can almost revive the dead."

The priest was mounting the stairs with the elements; behind him came Antonio Fioraventi: the master of the house advanced to meet him, pale, trembling, with white lips and disheveled hair. It was noon. The sun brightly illuminated the staircase—every object was distinctly seen: the first movement of the baron—the proud, the haughty kinsman of a king—was to throw himself at the feet of the Italian, and to implore him to save his wife. Gold, lands, honours—all were promised to him if he would save her who was dearer than life itself.

Antonio glanced at the master of the house . . .

Great God! Merciful powers! 'Twas he, that terrible, that hated German, who had insulted him so cruelly at Rome. It was impossible to mistake. The man whom he had been tracking so many years—whose blood he had so thirsted for—for vengeance on whom he would have sold himself to Satan—that man was at his feet, in his power. Fioraventi laughed within his soul a laugh of hell: the man who had heard that laugh would have felt his hair bristle up. His hands shook, his lips quivered, his knees sank under him; but he struggled to be calm, and said, with a Satanic smile—"Well, we will see!"

In these words a whole eternity was condensed.

The baron did not recognize him: how could he, in the midst of such agonizing despair, remember, or form a clear idea of any thing! He saw in him only the preserver of his wife—his guardian angel; and he was ready to bear him in his arms to the chamber of the sufferer.

"Haste, in the name of God, haste!" cried Ehrenstein, in a tone that would have touched a tiger.

"Well, we will see!" sternly replied Fioraventi, and at this moment the genius of revenge illumined, as with a flickering lightning flash, the dark abysses of his soul, and traced out what he was to do.

They proceed: they enter the sufferer's chamber. A half light, cautiously admitted, allowed the physician to distinguish her features, and to perform his duties. How beautiful she was, in spite of her sufferings! His foe was happy in her! so much the better! Still more deep and vast would be his vengeance! . . .

"God be thanked—the priest!" said the baroness in a dying voice.

"No, my love! it is not the priest," softly whispered Ehrenstein consolingly: "do not despair; this is a famous physician who will save you. . . . My presentiment will not deceive me. . . . I believe firmly; and do thou, dearest, believe too!" . . .

"Ah, learned physician! save me!" faintly uttered the dying lady.

A minute—two—three—five—of deep, grave-like silence! they were counted on the husband's heart by the icy fingers of death. At length Fioraventi went up to him.

"She" . . .

And the physician stopped.

Ehrenstein devoured him with hungry eyes and ears. His mouth was open, but he uttered no sound. He was panting to say "life" or "death."

"She" . . .

And the physician again stopped. The baron's face became convulsed.

"She shall be saved. I answer for it with my life," said Fioraventi firmly—and the baron looked like some statue about to descend from its pedestal. Ehrenstein was irradiated with life: in silence he took Antonio's hand, in order to press it to his lips. The physician drew it back.

"She shall be saved, and your child also," he whispered; "but with a condition on my part!" . . .

"She" . . .

"Whatever you can wish," replied the baron.

"Think not that my request will be easy for you."

"I will refuse nothing. Demand my lands, my life, if you will."

"I am an Italian," said the physician; "I trust not to words. . . . The matter affects my welfare. . . . I must have an oath!" . . .

"I swear" . . .

"Stop! I saw a priest there" . . .

"I understand: you desire. . . . Let us go!" They went into the next chamber.

There stood an old man—a servant of God—holding the sacred elements: he was preparing to separate the earthly from the earth, and to give it wings to heaven.—"Holy father," said the baron solemnly, "be a mediator between me and the living God, whom now I call on to witness my oath."

The priest, not understanding wherefore, but moved by the deep voice of the baron, raised the cup with the sacraments, and reverently bent his hoary head.

"Now repeat after me," interrupted Fioraventi in a trembling voice, as though awe-struck

by the sanctity of the solemn rite; "but remember that twenty minutes, and no more, remain for me to save your wife: let them pass; and then blame yourself." Ehrenstein continued in the same deep, soul-felt tone, but so as not to be heard in his wife's chamber—"If my Amalia is saved, I swear by Almighty God, and by the most holy body of his only-begotten Son; may I perish in the agonies of hell, and may all my house perish even as a worm, when I depart from my oath." Then he turned his eyes on the physician, awaiting his dictation. The physician continued firmly:—"If a son is born to me, the first-born" . . .

The baron repeated:—"If a son is born to me, the first-born" . . .

"In a year to give up him, my son, to the Paduan doctor, Antonio Fioraventi!" . . .

The baron stopped. . . . A fountain of fire rushed to his heart. . . . He gazed at the tempter with all the power of his memory. . . . That glance recalled the adventure in Rome. . . . he recognized his opponent, and guessed his sentence.

"Speak, my lord baron: of the twenty minutes some are already gone" . . .

Ehrenstein continued with quivering lips:—"In a year to give up him, my son, to the Paduan doctor, Antonio Fioraventi: the same whom I, about five years ago, insulted without reason, and whom I now, before Jesus Christ, who pardoned the sins even of the thief, humbly implore to pardon me."

"Pardon? . . . ha! . . . No, proud baron! there is no mercy for you now! . . . Five years have I waited for this moment. . . . Say:—'I swear and I repeat my oath; to give up my first-born when he is a year old, to the leech Fioraventi, that he may bring him up to be a physician: wherefore I endow Master Fioraventi with the authority of a father; and that I will in no way interfere with his education, or in any thing else concerning him. If a daughter is born to me, to give her in marriage to the leech. . . . he alone, Fioraventi, is to have the right to absolve me from this oath.'" . . .

"No! I will not utter that" . . .

"Save me, I die!" was heard from the adjoining chamber. It was the faint voice of the Baroness Ehrenstein.

And the baron, without delay, repeated all Fioraventi's words, one after the other, in a funeral voice, as if he was reading his own death-doom: a cold sweat streamed from his forehead. When he had concluded, he sank senseless into a chair, supported by his faithful attendant Yan and the priest, who had been for some time agitated witnesses of this dreadful scene. Both hastened to render him assistance.

In the mean time Fioraventi rushed into the bed-chamber. After some minutes, Ehrenstein opened his eyes, and the first sound he heard was the cry of an infant.

All was forgotten.

He went cautiously to the door of the bed-chamber, and applied his ear to it; the lying-in woman was talking in a low voice. . . . She was thanking the physician.

The leech returned, and said:—"My lord baron, I congratulate you on a son."

CHAPTER III.

WAS IT FULFILLED ?

"The secret cause of his anguish

No man knew, but they saw how long and sorely lamenting
Sorrowed the desolate Tsar, as his son's return he awaited ;
Rest knew he none by day, by night sleep lulled not his eye-
lids.

Time rolled aye on his course." . . .

The Lay of the Tsar Berendei. . . . JOURKOFFSKOI

THE Baroness Ehrenstein, ignorant of what had passed between her husband and the physician, gave the name of the latter to her infant son, out of gratitude for the leech's services. The little Antony bloomed like a rose ; every day he grew more lively under his mother's eye, cherished by her tender care : and with the child bloomed also the mother. The father was only delighted in appearance ; the thought that he had given him up to the physician—that he had sold him, as it were, to Satan—that he would be nothing but a leech, poisoned all his joy ; often did the sight of the infant thus devoted from the cradle to ignominy, force tears from his eyes ; but then, fearing that his wife might perceive his sorrow, he would swallow the grief that swelled in his throat. A leech !—Heavens ! what would the world—what would his kinsmen say ! his friends—above all, his foes—when they learned the destiny of the baron's son ? How announce it to his wife ? It would kill her. Better had he never been born, ill-fated babe !

"My dear love," said the baroness one day, filled with rapture, as she held on her knees the lovely infant, "it was not for nothing that the astrologers promised our child such gifts. Admire him ! look ! what fire, what intelligence, in his eyes ! He looks at us as if he understood us. Methinks the stars of greatness are beaming on him. Who knows what high destiny awaits him ; even the Bohemian king, Podibrad, was but a simple noble !"

These words tore the father's soul. "My beloved," he said, "it is sinful for a father or mother to predict the fate of their children. 'Tis a sin of presumption, and offends Providence, which knows better than we do what is best for us."

"True," replied the mother, agitated by her presentiments, and perhaps also by the sorrow which appeared in her husband's words and looks ; "True, these predictions may offend the Lord. Let us only pray that he will not take him from us. O ! I could not survive my Antony !"

And the mother crossed the infant in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, fearing that her proud wishes might call down on him the anger of Heaven ; and she pressed him to her bosom, where her heart was beating like a lately hurried pendulum that is about to return to its regular vibration.

"Why did this son live—this child devoted to sorrow and its parents' shame ? What had he to do with the leech's life ? Better had the Lord taken him, early, to himself—to the choir of his angels . . . or rather, why did he not take the unhappy father ? . . . Thus the oath would not be fulfilled—the mother did not take the oath : mother and son would be happy."

Thus thought the father—the haughty baron. Sometimes the idea arose in his mind of voluntarily breaking the oath ; no one knew of its ex-

istence but the old priest and Yan : the priest had buried his part of the secret in the walls of some monastery—with the faithful retainer the secret was dead. But, weak-minded as the baron was, he dreaded eternal torments : the oath was graven in such burning characters in his memory, hell was so vividly painted in his conscience, that he determined on fulfilling the obligation. Some months passed, and still he delayed to disclose to his wife the dreadful secret of his oath ; many were his attempts, his struggles, his resolves, but they all concluded by deferring the explanation. Amalia was again pregnant ; this circumstance brought some relief to the agonized soul of the baron. Perhaps she would give him another son ! . . . Then the first might be given up a sacrifice to inexorable fate—let him be a physician ! . . .

A year passed, and as yet the mother knew nothing of the terrible secret. The baron waits one day . . . two . . . Fioraventi appears not to claim his victim. Perhaps he will not come ! . . . Weeks pass . . . no tidings of him . . . What if he be dead ! . . .

And the baron silently blessed each passing day. Why uselessly agitate the mother ? Perhaps Fioraventi had satiated his vengeance on the day of their son's birth ; perhaps the generous Fioraventi is satisfied with the tortures of suspense which he has already inflicted on his insulter, and desires no further fulfilment of the oath. Noble Fioraventi ! May the blessing of God be upon thee !

Spare thy blessings ! The Italian is not a child, to play with his feelings as with golden bubbles that vanish in the air.

One day—it was on the same day of the month, at the same hour, that the adventure had happened at Rome—the revenge was calculated—Yan, with a pallid face, entered his master's chamber. Yan spoke not a word ; but the other understood him.

"Here !" he enquired of the domestic, turning as pale as death.

"He ordered me to say that he is here," replied Yan.

Some days passed, and yet Fioraventi appeared not for his victim. Terrible days ! They deprived the baron of several years of life ! Oh, that he could conceal from the great nobility, from his kinsmen, his acquaintance, the court, from the lowest of his vassals, that his son was to be given up to a leech, as an apprentice is given to a shoemaker or a carpenter for a certain number of years ! These thoughts tormented him yet more than the sacrifice of his child. One day they brought the baron a letter. It was from Fioraventi !

Does it bring mercy or doom ?

He opened it with quivering hands, and breathlessly read : "I hear that the baroness is soon about to lie in again. Her confinement will be difficult, I am convinced. I offer my services."

We may guess that these services were accepted with delight and gratitude. Fioraventi concluded right : the baroness's labour was difficult ; and again the leech congratulated the baron on the safety of the mother and of a son, Ferdinand ; only adding—"Now we will share ; one for you, the other for me." This decision, pronounced with inflexibility, gave the father

the sad assurance that the destiny of his eldest son was not changed, and that all that was now left him was to prepare Amalia for it on her recovery. Two months' respite was given. Ehrenstein only requested that he might be allowed to place the child in some obscure place or village of Italy, where neither the baron nor the physician were known.

All this was granted, even like an alms which a rich man throws to a beggar. Yet one more favour. It was permitted to the father and mother to see their child every three years for a week, or even for a month, to caress him, to tell him he was their son; but in the character of poor German nobles of the house of Ehrenstein, under condition, however, of confirming in the boy a love for, and devotion to physic. Yet another condition was exacted: all kinds of aid and presents from his relations were to be decidedly refused. The baron agreed to this, rather as these conditions secured the secret from publicity, which he dreaded more than any thing.

At this time a fresh calamity fell upon the baron's house.

In spite of all the investigations of reason, there are still some questions relating to the connexion between the internal and external world, which must for ever remain unsolved. In a future world, perhaps, we may receive an explanation of the thousand difficulties which are offered by another state of existence. The law of presentiment is among the number of these questions. Who is there, from the king to the peasant, who has not felt its power, and who, in this chain of human beings, has ever explained its process? . . .

I preface with this reflection what I am about to tell of the presentiment which the baroness felt of her approaching loss. She dreamed that a ravenous wolf snatched her eldest babe from her bosom, and, throwing the child over his shoulder, bore him away . . . she knew not where. When she awoke, her agitation was so violent that her milk was driven to the head. Fioraventi again saved her life; but he could not obliterate the traces of her dreadful disorder. The baroness lost her beauty; dark stains disfigured her. One misfortune brought on another—the gradual cooling of her husband's love. Inconstant in his nature, his affection fled with the beauty of its object. Up to this time he had loved her ardently; there was no sacrifice which he would not have made to secure her welfare, nay, even her tranquillity; but his heart was like the transforming vase of a juggler—his flame could, in a few hours, change into ice. Thus it now happened. Henceforward all his cares were concentrated on his younger son. If, after a few months, the choice had been offered to him of losing Ferdinand or his wife, for whose preservation he had given up his son, and would have sacrificed himself, he would now, without hesitation, have consented to lose his wife, though, perhaps, he would not openly have said so.

Such was his character in the affairs of life. To-day, from vanity, he would have bared his breast to the spear point, or set out on a new crusade—to-morrow, he would not stir a pin's length—he would not defile his foot to save a perishing friend. To-day, at the foot of the foe

whom yesterday he had vanquished—to-morrow, ready to repeat the scene of the Roman father. To-day, he would seat you in the highest place at his board, overwhelming you with all the names of honour he could drag from the vocabulary of politeness and esteem—to-morrow, at the first nod from a vagabond gipsy, without examination, without reflection, he would let you dance attendance at his castle gate if you had need of him, and receive you with all the baronial hauteur — "welcome, friend." Such characters are not rare.

At the recovery of the baroness, they prepared to make a pilgrimage to our Lady of Loretto, to show their gratitude for the double preservation of the mother from death. They took with them the elder of the children; the younger they left with a nurse, under the care of a near kinsman. Fioraventi followed them on their journey, but not without precautions: he comprehended the baron's character, and was convinced that he who, out of fear of hell, would fulfill his dreadful oath, would not scruple (according to the temper he might be in) to send him into the other world; and therefore the physician took care to be accompanied by a number of well-armed dependents. Arriving at a place previously fixed on, the baron, who had left his attendants in the last town, and bringing with him only his wife and Yan, awaited the meeting with the leech. It now only remained for the baron to finish a drama which had become wearisome to him, and to prepare Amalia for a separation from her eldest son. At this moment, slumbering love, or pity and remorse, awakened in him: despair was painted in his face, when he came to his wife with intelligence of the dreadful sentence. "Thou art ill, my love," said she, terrified by the agitated state in which she saw him.

He confessed that he had long been suffering. Amalia reproached him for concealing his affliction from her: she covered him with her tears and kisses, she consoled him with expressions such as only the fondest and most anxious love could dictate. The baron confessed that his disease was in the soul . . . that it had commenced at the time of their first child's birth. . . . He communicated to her who so passionately loved him the doubts, the fears, the consolations, the anger, the struggle of duty with affection, the devotion to God; and when he had exhausted all feelings, amidst the tenderest caresses he proposed to her the alternative of losing her husband for ever, or her child for a time. At length he related his story with regard to Fioraventi; he described it as a visitation from God; he reminded her of her sufferings, and preparations for death; the appearance of the Italian, and the price at which he had saved her—by entering into a dreadful oath, thinking that the rapacious physician wished to extort an extravagant price for his services. By not fulfilling the oath, he would call down on himself the anger of God, the destruction of their son, and of all their race. By fulfilling it, he submitted himself to the will of Providence. Perhaps the Lord had sent them a consoling angel in their second son. The Italian, it might be, would take pity on them, and in time remit his sentence. He had already shown generosity in permitting them to see their child every three years.

All this had been skilfully prepared, and was eloquently urged; but what arguments can conquer the feelings of a mother, from whom they are about to take her son? All her soul was centred in the torture of this feeling—she thought of nothing else, she desired to know nothing else. To retain her son near her, she would have been ready to give up rank, wealth—all; and to become a slave. But the non-fulfilment of the oath would bring dreadful misfortunes on her husband; she decided on the sacrifice.

The mother consented to all: she begged only to be allowed to give up the child herself: she still entertained the hope of obtaining some concession from the cruel Fioraventi. "He is not a tiger, and even a tiger would drop the child from its fangs on beholding the despair of a mother." She desired first to try to touch the Italian: she would listen to no one, and proceeded herself to the hut where he was waiting. She was stopped at the door. In her humiliation, she waited an hour—two—three. . . . Nothing would bend the Italian. At last they brought her a letter:—"Lady Baroness, my word is immutable. Pray to God that I may soon die; for unless I do, your son will be a physician. One thing only I can grant a mother, from whom I take all her happiness; that is, to permit her to see Antonio in my house, not every three years, as I said to your husband, but every year, under the conditions, however, which are probably known to you. The infraction of these conditions gives me the right to retract my indulgence. This is my last concession, and my last word. At the appointed time I expect my ward Antonio."

They gave up their child; they parted from him. The mother did not die of grief, for in her heart was the hope of seeing her son in a year; and with hope we do not die. At that moment the physician—the insignificant leech—saw the baroness at his feet. Intellect retained the mastery.

The pair of Ehrensteins returned to Augsburg without their eldest son. He had died, they said, on the journey.

The baron, having quieted his conscience by the performance of his oath, did, in this critical situation, every thing that could be expected from a sensible husband, and gave up Antony, feeling, when he had done so, as if a mountain had been removed from his heart. Imagination gradually seemed to make his present peaceful, and his future bright. Little by little, he began to forget his eldest son: at first he thought of him as of an object to be pitied; then as of an object remote, strange; at last—hateful. In a year the parents were permitted to see Antony. The mother set out, alone, for this interview. Two more years—then three—and the baron's heart had begun to account of his son as of one dead. He centred all his hopes, his love, on his younger child; but the passion that henceforward possessed him was ambition. Employing every artifice to gain each step which could elevate him in the favour of his sovereign, relinquishing for each advance some feudal right, he at length reached one of the highest places at the court of the Emperor Frederick III. He became his favourite by ceasing to be a man: the higher he rose, the further did he

spurn away from him the memory of the son whom he had renounced; that memory at last totally vanished from his mind, like an insignificant speck swallowed up by the gloom of night. If ever a thought of Antony entered his mind, it was only how he might remove every suspicion of his shameful existence.

Antony's mother remained the same tender parent as at the first moment of his life; what do I say?—her love grew with his unhappy lot. Of the two children, Antony was, in fact, her favourite. Ferdinand enjoyed all the rights of birth; he was cherished every day in his mother's bosom, he grew up in all the luxury of parental fondness, the spoiled child of his father's ostentation. His desires were guessed, that they might be anticipated. This darling of destiny lacked nothing from his very birth; but the other had hardly seen the light before he was exiled from the paternal house, from home, despoiled of all his rights, and was growing up in the hands of a foreigner, a stranger—the foe of his family. The caress which a mother lavished upon him—even the privilege of seeing him—was purchased from that stranger at a heavy price of humiliation. How could she but love, and love, the most, this child of misfortune! Fate itself seemed to have determined on sharing the two children between the father and the mother; so complete was the difference between them. Amalia—unhappy—exiled from her husband's heart. . . . Antony—also exiled—also unhappy—his features the features of his mother, his character cast in the same mould as hers. He loved her even more fondly than his guardian. Ferdinand, like the baron, proud, vain, of an unsettled disposition, resembled him also in face: he remarked his father's coldness to, and sometimes coarse treatment of, his mother; and he even dared, in some uncontrollable sallies against her, to show himself the worthy son of his sire, and the inheritor of all his qualities. He tortured animals, cruelly beat the horse on which he rode, and the domestics who delayed to perform his orders; insulted, in imitation of his father, the court fool and court physician—Master Leon, as he was called—and once set his dogs upon him. He showed no inclination to learn, and was addicted only to athletic sports. How many reasons were there—not to speak of misfortunes—to prefer the eldest son to this!

Years passed on, in the full performance of the promises interchanged by the parents and the instructor of Antony—in the rapture of the periodical meeting and in the tears of the periodical separation, which seemed to the mother's heart an age. But the more she forgot her afflictions in her love for the dear exile, in his attachment to his mother, in the noble qualities of his heart and intellect, the more sedulous grew the baron in inventing new sorrows for her. She was ordered to assure Antony of his father's death; a sentence which announced to her that her son had for ever lost him as a parent: we may judge what the mother must have felt in communicating this false intelligence to her child. Nevertheless, she obeyed the will of her lord and master, secretly indulging the hope that time might change his sentiments. The child who had never known a father's love, received the intelligence of his

death as of that of a stranger. Ferdinand attained his twenty-third year: he caught cold, was attacked by a violent fever, and died. This misfortune, sent by Heaven as if to punish the cruel father and husband, overwhelmed him. It seemed as though this loss was likely to recall his love for his eldest son; but no! he remained as much estranged from him as before.

In the mean time Antony grew up, and was educated at Padua, under the name of a poor German noble, Ehrenstein. Handsome, clever, easily accessible to all impressions of virtue and enlightenment, exhibiting in all his actions an elevated feeling, and a kind of chivalric adventurousness, he was the delight of Fioraventi. With advancing years, he became enamoured of the science to which his instructor had devoted him; the young candidate gave himself up to it with all the zeal of an ardent and lofty soul. No avaricious views were those which led him to the altar of science, but love of humanity and thirst for knowledge. But he had one important fault, originating in the character of his own mind, and of the epoch in which he lived. This was an ardent and visionary turn of mind, irrepressible till gratified. "That is like my brother Alberto, who is in Muscovy," said Fioraventi, reproving him for this fault: "he is gone to build a wondrous temple in a savage country, where they know not yet how to burn bricks and make mortar." "I envy him," cried the youth; "he does not crawl, step by step, along the same road as the crowd; he flaps the wing of genius, and soars far above the common race of mortals: and even if he falls, he has at least aspired to heaven. He is consoled by the thought that he has vanquished the Material, and will build for himself a deathless monument, which even our Italy will adore!" These visions, thought Fioraventi, will pass away in time; with the desire of perfecting himself will come experience—and he looked on his pupil with the delight of a father, and with the pride of an instructor. To make him a famous physician—to present him to society a member more useful than a petty baron, perhaps altogether insignificant—to give science new progress, to history a new name—these were the thoughts and hopes with which he quieted his conscience.

At the age of twenty-five, Antony Ehrenstein completed his medical course at the university of Padua. Antony a physician—Fioraventi's revenge was satisfied. At this time, he consented to his pupil's desire to travel in Italy. The young physician set off for Milan: there he intended to hear, from the lips of the celebrated Niccola di Montano, those lessons of eloquence and philosophy that were then considered as the only conductors to all science, and which kings themselves condescended to attend. Instead of these lectures, he heard the sound of the lash inflicted on the learned man by his former pupil, the Duke of Milan, Galeazzo Sforza. Instead of the numerous audience of Di Montano, he saw the unwilling victims given over, by the voluptuous and haughty tyrant, to the insults of his courtly slaves and flatterers. He saw them scoffing at humanity, and overwhelming their fellow-creatures with humiliation. At Rome the same depravity—

the fagot, the dagger, and the poison at every step. As Antony proceeded on his journey, he saw every where sedition, scantily relieved with the exploits of the select few, and every where the triumph of the ignorant mob and of brute force. How was it possible for a virgin mind, with all its love for what was noble and virtuous, to look with patience on the spectacle of such a world! Filled with indignation, he returned to Padua: the only consolation he brought home with him was the recollection of his friendship with Lionardo da Vinci, who had become attached to him as to a son. Accident had brought them together: the artist, meeting him, had been so struck with the union of physical and intellectual beauty in his face, that he had endeavoured to attract him to his studio. In more than one figure of a heavenly messenger, on the canvass of Lionardo da Vinci, we may recognise Antony. From this famous painter he learned anatomy. On leaving Italy, he went to see his mother in the poor Bohemian castle, on the bank of the Elbe, which she had bought solely for the interviews with her son, and for his future visits: this, she informed him, was the whole of his family possessions. Here he remained nearly a year, occasionally visiting Prague and its university, then a celebrated one.

Soon after his return to Padua, Fioraventi received a letter from Muscovy, through the Russian envoy then at Venice. This letter was from his brother Rudolph Alberti, surnamed Aristotle, a famous architect, who had been for some time residing at the court of the Muscovite Great Prince, Iván III., Vassilievitch. The artist begged his brother to send a physician to Moscow, where he would be awaited by honours, wealth, and fame.

Fioraventi began to look out for a physician who would volunteer into a country so distant and so little known: he never thought of proposing the journey to his pupil: his youth—the idea of a separation—of a barbarous country—all terrified the old man. His imagination was no longer wild—the intellect and the heart alone had influence on him. And what had Antony to hope for there? His destiny was assured by the position of his instructor—his tranquillity was secured by circumstances—he could more readily make a name in Italy. The place of physician at the court of the Muscovite Great Prince would suit a poor adventurer; abundance of such men might be found at that time possessed of talents and learning. But hardly was Aristotle's letter communicated to Antony, than visions began to float in his ardent brain. "To Muscovy!" cried the voice of destiny—"To Muscovy!" echoed through his soul, like a cry remembered from infancy. That soul, in its fairest dreams, had long pined for a new, distant, unknown land and people: Antony wished to be where the physician's foot had never yet penetrated: perhaps he might discover, by questioning a nature still rude and fresh, powers by which he could retain on earth its short-lived inhabitants; perhaps he might extort from a virgin soil the secret of regeneration, or dig up the fountain of the water of life and death. But he who desired to penetrate deeper into the nature of man might have remarked other motives in his desire. Did not knightly blood boil in his veins? Did not the

spirit of adventure whisper in his heart its hopes and high promises? However this might be, he offered, with delight, to go to Muscovy; and when he received the refusal of his preceptor, he began to entreat, to implore him incessantly to recall it. "Science calls me thither," he said; "do not deprive her of new acquisitions, perhaps of important discoveries. Do not deprive me of glory, my only hope and happiness." And these entreaties were followed by a new refusal. "Knowest thou not," cried Fioraventi, angrily, "that the gates of Muscovy are like the gates of hell—step beyond them, and thou canst never return." But suddenly, unexpectedly, from some secret motive, he ceased to oppose Antony's desire. With tears he gave him his blessing for the journey. "Who can tell," said he, "that this is not the will of fate! Perhaps, in reality, honour and fame await thee there."

At Padua was soon known Antony Ehrenstein's determination to make that distant journey; and no one was surprised at it: there were, indeed, many who envied him.

In truth, the age in which Antony lived was calculated to attune the mind to the search after the unknown, and to serve as an excuse for his visions. The age of deep profligacy, it was also the age of lofty talents, of bold enterprises, of great discoveries. They dug into the bowels of the earth; they kept up in the laboratory an unextinguished fire; they united and separated elements; they buried themselves living, in the tomb, to discover the philosopher's stone, and they found it in the innumerable treasures of chemistry which they bequeathed to posterity. Nicholas Diaz and Vasco de Gama had passed, with one gigantic stride, from one hemisphere to another, and showed that millions of their predecessors were but pigmies. The genius of a third visioned forth a new world, with new oceans—went to it, and brought it to mankind. Gunpowder, the compass, printing, cheap paper, regular armies, the concentration of states and powers, ingenious destruction, and ingenious creation—all were the work of this wondrous age. At this time, also, there began to spread indistinctly about, in Germany and many other countries of Europe, those ideas of reformation, which soon were strengthened, by the persecution of the Western Church, to array themselves in the logical head of Luther, and to flame up in that universal crater, whence the fury, lava, and smoke, were to rush with such tremendous violence on kingdoms and nations. These ideas were then spreading through the multitude, and when resisted, they broke through their dikes, and burst onward with greater violence. The character of Antony, eager, thirsting for novelty, was the expression of his age: he abandoned himself to the dreams of an ardent soul, and only sought whither to carry himself and his accumulations of knowledge.

Muscovy, wild still, but swelling into vigour, with all her boundless snows and forests, the mystery of her orientalism, was to many a newly-discovered land—a rich mine for human genius. Muscovy, then for the first time beginning to gain mastery over her internal and external foes, then first felt the necessity for real, material civilization.

Among the family of arts and trades which

came at her call, the first were architecture, painting, and the art of founding bells and cannon. In military affairs they began to call in the power of firearms in aid of the force of their muscles. The temples demanded greater magnificence, the princess and boyárens required greater convenience and security from conflagration. All these wants Iván III., Vassilievitch, fostered and gratified, looking already on Russia with the eye and the intentions of a Tsar. Perhaps the marriage-ring of the last descendant of the Palæologi had strengthened his innate love for the splendour of royal life, if not a passion for art and science. Sophia talked to him of the wondrous palaces and temples of Italy, of the magnificence of the courts of that country; and in these recitals she pointed out to him the means of realizing those ideas of external grandeur which were already stirring in the sovereign's head and heart. Never could the wants of the Russians in this respect have been better satisfied: into Italy were thronging crowds of learned men, terrified by the Ottoman sword; Italy, in her turn, hastened to share with other nations the overplus of treasures and endowments brought to her by the descendants of Phidias and Archimedes. Poverty, boldness, and love of the beautiful, brought these treasures hither: architects, founders, painters, sculptors, workers in gold and silver, crowded to Moscow.

"No one has heard as yet of any distinguished physician having visited Muscovy; but what good might he not do there! . . . For a physician the task of enlightenment is more easy, more ready, than for any one else: man is always willing to be instructed by his benefactor. The Russian people is young, fresh, consequently ready to receive all that is noble and sublime," thought Antony: "to Moscow, Antony! thither with your ardent soul, your virgin hopes, with your learned experience—thither, to this Columbia of the East!"

The young physician was followed from Padua by the affection of his learned preceptors, by wishes for his success—by the love of all who knew him. He was followed, too, by the regrets of the passionate maidens of Italy: if he had remained, many a white and delicate wrist would have been held out to the young leech, that he might mark in it the beating of the pulses that were quickened by his touch. How many secret consultations were preparing for him! And, in truth, it was not science, it was not the bachelor's diploma, that caused these regrets; ye gods! what science! . . . A pair of blue eyes, full of fire and attractive pensiveness, flaxen curls as soft and waving as a lamb's fleece; the fair complexion of the north, a form magnificently moulded. What more? And that youthful bashfulness which it is so enchanting to subdue. That the taste of the Italian women is just, is proved by their countrymen. On meeting the German bachelor, the artists fixed on him an eager and admiring look: the eye of Leonardo da Vinci knew well how to appreciate the beautiful. In spite, however, of the seductions of the Italian sirens, the burning challenges of their eyes and lips, the bouquet of flowers and fruits thrown on him, after the custom of the country, from their windows, Antony Ehrenstein carried from Italy a heart free from all passion and every sensual stain.

Fioraventi bade farewell to his pupil with many and bitter tears; accompanying him as far as the Bohemian castle. He supplied him not only with every necessary for his journey, but with every means for presenting himself with brilliancy at the court of the Muscovite sovereign.

If there were a paradise upon earth, Antony would have found it in the whole month which he passed in the Bohemian castle. Oh! he would not have exchanged that poor abode, the wild nature on the banks of Elbe, the caresses of his mother, whose age he would have cherished with his care and love—no! he would not have exchanged all this for magnificent palaces, for the exertions of proud kinsmen to elevate him at the imperial court, for numberless vassals, whom, if he chose, he might hunt to death with hounds.

But true to his vow, full of the hope of being useful to his mother, to science, and to humanity, the visionary renounced this paradise: his mother blessed him on his long journey to a distant and unknown land: she feared for him; yet she saw that Muscovy would be to him a land of promise—and how could she oppose his wishes?

CHAPTER IV.

THE PLOT.

"Fate's heavy hand hath press'd thee sore,
And life is anguish to thee;
But I have means to end the woe
That o'er thy head doth lower.
Thy Maker is thy fellest foe:
Trust to Asmodeus' power . . .
With heart and hand I'll guard thy weal,
Even as friend and brother."

Joukoffski—Gromoboi.

"Thus they their compact made for mutual assistance."
Khmayinitzkoj.

THE Feast of St. Hierasimus was come, the 4th of March, the day when first appear the cawing harbingers of bounteous Spring; but the rooks had not yet arrived, as though Winter, grown proud or lazy, had refused to stir, and yield his reign to his joyous rival. The day was just breaking. At a mill-dam, situated near the pool of Neglinnaia, two horsemen might be seen to meet, apparently two boyarins. They then began to direct their path to the Kreml, towards the Borovitchi gate. It would appear almost impossible to bring together two beings so unlike each other in point of exterior; nevertheless, a penetrating glance might have detected in each of them a character cast in the same mould, with some of those inconsiderable differences which Nature so lavishly exhibits.

Have you ever seen Petrôff in Robert le Diable? Of course you have. I have seen him but once in that part; but to this day, whenever I think of him, I fancy I can hear those accents, like echoes from hell—"Yes, *Bertram!*" and I behold that look from which, as from the storied fascination of the rattlesnake, your mind can hardly free itself—that saffron-coloured countenance, written by the trace of passions—and that forest of hair, from which a nest of serpents seems ready to creep forth. Now, clothe that Petrôff in the ancient Russian dress, belt him with a silver girdle, in a rich

shoubá of fox-skin, and a high cap of soft fur and you will immediately have before you one of the two persons who were riding along the mill-dam of Neglinnaia. He was mounted on a powerful steed, accoutred with a Circassian saddle, caparisoned with jingling ornaments in arabesque, flowered in silver, and bordered with fish teeth. The other horseman was a little lean personage, with sunken eyes, a starveling face, and gestures so subdued and timid, that he seemed afraid of so much as disturbing the air; so obsequious and cringing—a real lamb! . . . But though he seemed to creep out stealthily from under his shell into the light of heaven, and peered askance around him from half-opened eyes, yet, believe me, he could mark his victim with a hawk's glance; swiftly would he pounce on it, and rapidly again he would hide himself in his dark, obscene covert. Taking off his cap, which was rather shabby, (this he did, as well as his companion, very frequently, on passing every church, before which the Russian Bertram crossed himself rapidly, while the meek man made the holy sign earnestly, striking his breast the while)—taking off his cap, he uncovered a head fringed irregularly with ragged tufts of hair. As if to be of a piece with his locks, the edge of his shoubá was so worn that it would have been difficult to determine what animal had supplied the fur of which it was made. A starved jade of a horse, with caparisons suitable to its wretchedness, scrambled and tottered along under him. He was much older than his companion—the latter might be rather more than forty, and was in the full vigour of life—the former seemed a decrepit old man. The one was a boyárin; the other, a boyárin and dvorétzkoj (major-domo) to the Great Prince. These gentlemen bore names well suited to their nature: the first was called Mamón; the second, Roussálka.*

"Is God still good to thee, Mikháil Yákovlevitch?" asked Mamón.

"Thanks to thy prayers, brother Grigórii Andréevitch," replied Roussálka; "or else the earth would not bear me with the weight of my sins."

"The Lord alone is sinless."

"The Lord in heaven; and add, our lord the Great Prince of all Russia."

"It seemeth he hath taken thee back into favour."

Here Mamón glanced cunningly at his companion. The latter, without the least sign of vexation, replied—"Where there is wrath, there also is mercy: to one he giveth to-day, to another to-morrow; one man sinketh, another swimmeth; all the difficulty is to know how to catch him, kinsman."

"One may catch; but he slippeth through one's fingers. What have I and thou gained? Castles in the air, and the nickname of informers. . . . A rare gain! Look at the other boyarins. Look no further than Obrazétz! He hath built himself a fine stone palace, so high that it overlooketh the Kreml."

"They say, he meteth out his rose-nobles by bushels. Where is the wonder, then? He

* *Roussálka*—an evil spirit, haunting the sea with comb and mirror, like our mermaid; but occasionally met with also in the forests and rivers, as the "*Nekka*" of Denmark.—T. B. S.

scraped it up at N6vgorod—no offence to his grace! The Lord keep us from that sin!" (here he crossed himself.) "War plunder is fair plunder."

"'Tis no sin to break a cursed cow's horn. The proud Shel6n6tz, he thinketh no man his mate!"

"How is it that thy son is no mate for his daughter, in birth and rank, in brains and beauty?"

Mam6n's eyes gleamed. He had just demanded the voev6da Obraz6tz's daughter in marriage for his son, and received a refusal. There were reports that it was because the mother of this Mam6n was a witch, and had been burned.* At Rouss6lka's words, he felt as if his cap had been on fire: he pressed it down with a mighty hand, and replied, smiling bitterly—"Thou hast heard it, then?"

"I alone, think'st thou?"

"Not thou alone? . . . ay, others . . . many . . . all Moscow!"

"This world is full of reports, good Grig6rii Andr6evitch."

"What! they laugh! . . . they say, whither would the witch-brood thrust itself! . . . Ha! they prate? Speak, good friend, I pray thee."

"'Twere a sin to hide it. . . . Obraz6tz himself vaunteth"

"Vaunteth! accursed hound! But thou, good brother, didst thou not put in a little word for me?"

"I racked my brain I worked the voev6da behind his back. My soul was in the work. I put all my persuasion on my tongue. . . . I said that Obraz6tz had sent the svat* to thee, and"

"Sent or not, what care I! Look, brander!"† added Mam6n, shaking his fist towards the house of the voev6da Obraz6tz, "deeply hast thou seared thy brand in my breast; I will tear it off, though it drag a mass of my flesh with it—I will dress it daintily with poison strong poison! I will serve it up on no common dish, but on silver thou shalt eat it, and praise the cook! Thou wilt help, Mikh6il Y6kovlevitch? Ay, good faith, thou wilt! Feast for feast. He hath feasted thee, too, right well at his house-warming, hath he not?"

It was now Rouss6lka's turn. His face was convulsed: he began to twitch his eyelids: it was evident he was touched to the quick. Ife, however, by a violent effort remained silent. His companion continued to cast on him a glance of mockery. "And the feast was for all comers! Many a barrel of mead did they roll out of the cellar; many a grave head sank below the table; and they brought round rose-nobles to the guests, in memory of the banquet . . . Wert thou bidden, dvor6tzkoi of the Great Prince?"

Nothing could so deeply move the greedy soul of the dvor6tzkoi as the being reminded of lost gain. He seemed to be agitated, and an-

swered with a sigh—"What should I have done among the warriors of the Shel6n! I have never flayed off the skins of captive N6vgorodetz." (He alluded to the Prince Daniel Dmitrievitch Kh6lmskoi.) "We have never led a youngster son, a weak child, beneath the crusader's sword. No child-angel can accuse us! We have never torn a child from its mother to slaughter!" (Here he hinted at Obraz6tz himself.) "What can we do? We are afraid to kill a chicken! How should we, then, presume to thrust ourselves into the throng of valiant warriors, whose arms, God forgive them! are up to the elbows in blood?"

"No! we will not kill a chicken, whose neck we can twist; but we will bend our bow, and let fly a sharp arrow at the vulture that is soaring on high: . . . 'twill be rare to see him tumble! 'Tis useless to conceal sin: 'tis a mortal feud with both of us: false humility is worse than pride: 'tis but a sheep that will bow its head under the knife. 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,' saith the Scripture: we are but sinful men! In my mind, for one eye should be plucked out two—for one tooth, not one should be left behind—even if it gave thy soul to Satan!"

Rouss6lka spat, crossed himself, and murmured—"God forgive us!"

"It is not prayers, but craft, that I expect from my counsellor and friend. Thy head doth not burn nor whirl like mine. Thou shalt stand up for me, I for thee. There are those who will second both of us—we will answer for them—all round, come what may! In other lands, as our travellers say, nobles rein not themselves too hard."

Rouss6lka continued, with a fiendish smile—"I will not hide from thee, good brother! . . . I was telling to our Prince a poor thought of my brain; 'twill be as good to the voev6da as a stroke with a club. Hast thou heard! There cometh from Germany the leech Antony, very skilful in the cure of all manner of diseases: he is now three days' journey off." . . .

"What of that?"

"This, thou hotbrain! Obraz6tz hath a new stone palace, finely built, and—thou mayest say—it shall fall upon his head. He hath pulled down his rotten wooden house: he hath nowhere to go. Our fair lord, the Great Prince, in case of any ill event—from which God keep Iv6n Vassilievitch every hour of his life!—he willethe I say, that the leech should be lodged near the palace. From thence to Obraz6tz's house is not a stone's throw. Now the leech Antony—an unclean Almayne—must" . . .

"Must be lodged in the voev6da's palace!" burst in Mam6n, with a voice of delight; "will take his best chambers—armory, hall, and dortour . . . An Almayne will be worse in his house than an unclean spirit! You may smoke him with incense—ye may exorcise him with holy water; but this friend, once placed there by Iv6n Vassilievitch, ye will never conjure out with all your power. The master himself must run. But is such the Great Prince's will?"

"I will answer for that, good brother! I will expound unto thee. . . . To-day I speak against thee—to-morrow, thou against me—one against the other. Let us shake the boughs, but not touch the root. I am safe, thou art

* By Ivan Andr6evitch, Prince of Mojsk. — *Note of the Author.*

† Svat—a person who makes for another a proposal of marriage; marriage broker. This duty was called *svatovstvo*. — T. B. S.

‡ An officer whose duty it was to brand horses, and collect a tax for the crown, or for monasteries. — *Note of the Author.*

safe, and our little matters are done. Obrázézt, thou knowest, had a brawl with the Almayne ambassador in the audience-chamber. Ioánn Vassilievitch looked not too lovingly on him then; and the voevóda had fallen into disfavour but that the battle of Shelón was still warm in the prince's memory And so he is still well with him. But if thou hearkenest with thine ear at the Great Prince's heart—oh! it boileth, it seetheth with anger against him; and he will not be easy till it boil over on the fiery boyárin, until he hath paid him, Almayne for Almayne. We have but to hint"

Mamón reined in his steed, took off his bonnet, and, lowering it, made a profound obeisance, as if acknowledging the other's Satanic superiority.

The latter, smiling in his turn, raised his own cap, and continued—"We are friends; we will settle our accounts hereafter, good brother Gri-górii Andréévitch."

"We have settled them already, if thou wilt confess my services. Let us talk freely. But now thou wert speaking of the matter of the Prince Loukómskii, of his interpreter."

"God watch over Ioánn Vassilievitch, and the good Russian land! . . . The Lithuanian was sent by his King, Kazimir, to take off Ioánn Vassilievitch—a slave informed—the poison was found. What is easier than to take sanctuary in Lithuania, where every man findeth refuge who cometh under the wrath of our good lord!"

"I put Loukómskii to the question, and the interpreter—they would confess nothing. I sent for some old women—made them lick the poison. I crammed a good dose of it down the throat of one. I gave some to a dog—neither hag nor hound died."

"And what next, brother?" asked Roussálka, anxiously.

"Next! when thou madest the trial . . . the same dog burst with one grain of it. I made all fast with a good hempen cord; dost thou mark? Fear not. I will not make thee out a liar, Mikháil Yákovlevitch."

The dvorétzkoï, in his turn, took off his shabby cap, and bowing low, ejaculated—"The Lord himself will repay thee!"

"Enough! sin not, Mikháil: we are friends, we will settle our accounts: only help me in Obrázézt's matter."

The dvorétzkoï pointed meaningly to the Church of the Saviour, which they were now approaching. The pinnacles of the Great Prince's palace peered above it. That their plot might not be suspected, they entered, one by the water-gate of the Kreml, the other by the Kikólskoï gate. Their separation was only to last till they reached the Great Prince's court, whither they were both bound.

To the salutations of the passengers, who knew that they were powerful men, Mamón replied by slightly raising his cap, while Roussálka answered them by low reverences. Some young soldiers, who had nothing to lose but their heads, shouted after the former the name of "Pickthank," which he left behind him to posterity; for the second, they expressed their contempt only by a slight laugh. It must be confessed that Mamón was peculiarly disliked by the people; because, at the time of the invasion of the Russian territory by the horde of Makhmet, he had disposed the Great Prince to

timid measures; and had ever been a whisperer about every thing that took place in private life and in the world. Roussálka knew how to avoid this odium by veiling his actions under an air of virtue and necessity, and found a justification with a generous people in his affected poverty, his universal affability, and Christian meekness: while his haughty and arrogant friend trampled public opinion in the dust, and boasted of his place, which brought him near the person of the Great Prince, and often vaunted of his own power and opportunities for doing harm.

CHAPTER V.

THE SALUTATION.

THE Great Prince was then residing in the wooden palace called the "*Old Place*," beyond the Church of the Annunciation, then recently built. In addition to this, there was still standing the ruinous old palace behind the church of Michael the Archangel (this was still of wood) in the square of *Yaroslawf*. All these buildings were about to be taken down, one after the other: the *Golden Palace*, and the *Tower Palace of the Women*, were already completed in the mind's eye of Iván Vassilievitch; and he was only awaiting, to execute his plans, the skilful architects who were shortly to arrive with the German physician. The residence of the Great Princes consisted of a number of chambers, giving off or issuing from a principal building. These were variously designated according to their object and situation; the "*Hall*," the "*Middle Izba*," the "*West Chamber*," the "*Audience-hall*," the "*Hall of the Square Pillar*," the "*Dortour*," the "*Banqueting-room*," the "*Store-rooms*," and so on. These buildings were all surrounded by corridors or covered galleries, the sides of which were solid, leading to the parish church and to various oratories; the principal of these galleries conducted to the Church of the Annunciation, called for this reason the Great Prince's church. The ruler of the people never began or finished a day without a prayer in the house of God. Even the sick and the women were not excused from this duty; windows were made in their chambers in such a manner, that they could hear divine service, and perform their devotions, within sight of the images of the churches. In the same manner in after times almost every rich man had a church in the court-yard of his house. Many flights of steps, among which the "*Red Stairs*" were distinguished, by being of stone and by sculptured ornaments, led down into the great square. The "*Waterside Palace*" projected from the front of the private residence. The architecture of these times was simple—even childish: its principal triumphs consisted in some external decorations. The front, as is generally the case in all the more splendid Russian churches, indicated, by the elevation of its cupolas, that the heart of the worshipper should be raised on high. Glance at the engravings of Indian temples, particularly those of the Zigs, and you will find in them the archetype of the Russian churches. The artists endeavoured in general to surpass each other in the luxuriance of twisted columns and arabesque carvings, in the decoration of the ornamented windows. This carving was so excellent as to resemble the most delicate lace-work: in spite, however, of these adornments, the an-

cient abode of the Great Princes acquired an air of gloom from the rusty iron gratings which defended the windows, the dim panes of mica fixed in lead, and from the sloping attics losing themselves in the old tomb-like roof, on which time had scattered patches of green and reddish moss. We have said that the palace was situated in the square. Four streets, rather wider than was usual in those days, crowded with churches, chapels, and houses resembling the dwellings of rich farmers in the governments of Nôvgorod and Pskoff—and you have the Court Square! We must add, that many small houses, in spite of the presence of the palace, projected irregularly from the line of the street, as if to boast of their owners' liberty. The whole of the *City*, bounded by the wall of the Kreml, resembled an ant-hill of towers and churches, through which some child had traced, in various directions, a number of random paths. Above these paths the roofs of the houses almost met each other, so that a bold and active man—to say nothing of the Devil on Two Sticks—might have made a tolerably long journey upon them. It was from this crowded state of the city it happened, that conflagration had so often devoured the whole of Moscow. But in this old palace, beyond the Church of the Annunciation, dwelt the first Tsar of All Russia: here he projected and prepared her future power: hither, alarmed by the signs of that power, the sovereigns of many countries sent their ambassadors to bow before him, and entreat his alliance. On approaching this palace, the Russian courtiers redoubled their prayers to the Almighty, that he might save them from the wrath of their terrible earthly ruler.

The sun, not far above the horizon, was shedding his morning radiance over the earth, yet all the inhabitants of the palace were a-foot, and had begun their daily occupations; the court attendants were every where busied in their various duties. Their offices had been instituted by Iván, in imitation of the royal households of Europe; but they were designated by Russian titles expressive of their official employments, (titles afterwards unfortunately changed by Peter the First.) The dvorétzkoi Roussálka arrayed himself in a fresh dress: he had had time, however, to pay a short visit to Iván's grandson, and to carry him some playthings—to perform various commissions for Sophia the consort of the Great Prince, and Helena the wife of his son, although these princesses were not on good terms with each other: one courtier he had gratified with a caressing word, another with a jest; he was seen every where, he busied himself in every thing. Not contenting himself with the performance of his regular and stated duties, he endeavoured to anticipate the desires and wishes of his sovereign, even for the following day. The dvorétzkoi's duties were confined to the Great Prince's court; but he extended their circle, by every means in his power, beyond its limits. On Roussálka were heaped the most difficult and ticklish tasks, not unfrequently the most dangerous and dirty ones: he sometimes volunteered himself to undertake them, as if to show that, though weak in his exterior, he was yet a giant in craft and intellect. Iván liked such servants, and it was of such a one he said, pointing to him with triumph—"A cur he may be, but he layeth eggs for me!" When he remarked their rascalities, he punished them with an angry word, a stroke of the staff, or a tempo-

rary disgrace; but more frequently he shut his eyes to their delinquencies, when they did not injure his person or the state. Holding the staff of the Great Prince, and the second state bonnet, the dvorétzkoi was awaiting the sovereign's appearance at the door of the middle izba, which separated the sleeping chamber from the hall of the square pillar, where Roussálka was now in attendance. The naked walls of this chamber were decorated only on the four sides by images* of enormous size, in frames, with curtains of damask, bordered with fringes strung with gold *drobnitzas*, or Hungarian pfennings. In the wide chamber there was no furniture but an oak table, adorned with delicate carving, and two stools with cushions covered with cloth; beneath each was a footstool, and on the floor was spread a carpet of *Kizibakh* (Persian manufacture)—an "underfoot," as it was called by our ancestors. All was as still as in a tomb. Motionless stood Roussálka, his ears and all his thoughts bent upon the door through which the Great Prince was to enter. Suddenly, within the middle izba, was heard a cry, like that of a feeble old man, uttered in a strange hoarse voice—"Tsar Iván Vassílievitch! Tsar Iván!" Then Roussálka smiled craftily, shrugged his shoulders, and nodded his head, as much as to say—"That's the affair!" then applied his ear to the door. Thus they spoke within—"Ha! ha! ha! this is a trick of thine, Phominishna,"† said a male voice; "Thou madest me go forth against the Tartars, and now I see thy train . . . Thanks, thanks!" A door creaked, and at the same moment a woman's voice was heard—"It is time! All Russia boweth down to thee in that name; and even the Roman Cæsar calleth thee so."

"Tsar Iván! Tsar Iván!" again cried the old-man-like voice.

"Enough!" interrupted the commanding voice of the male speaker; "I have, as it is, many Tsars in my brain! It is not thou that hast moved me. In my heart 'tis time; but in the world it is not come yet. Long have the eyes beheld it; but the teeth could not grasp it . . . All Russia! where is it? Where is that kingdom, mighty, united, commanding; like one body, in which hand and foot do what the head willeth?"

"Thou has quieted the Tartar, thou hast quelled Nôvgorod, and spread thy power so wide, that thou mayest call thyself the Russian Tsar," interrupted Sophia Phominishna.

"Ay, I have spread it wide; and what I have grasped that hold I firm; but here, it is my own people that weigh upon me, and bind me. 'Tis even so with my kinsmen! I am hampered by Yarosláf, Rostóff, Ouglitch, Riázin. The gate of my kingdom is not firmly barred, while Vereia belongeth to another. As I go to my good town of Nôvgorod, I stumble over Tver . . . Look from the window, my love; canst thou not behold from it a foreign principality, a foreign power? Admire the stone palaces, the noble cathedrals of my capital—our dwelling! . . . Is there any thing like it in foreign lands? Out and

* The Greek Church forbids the use of sculpture in the representation of sacred personages, the decoration of churches, &c.; employing for this purpose *pictures*, generally in the smooth hard Byzantine style, the whole surface, excepting the face and hands, being encrusted with silver or gold. These, though not strictly works of sculpture, are called in Russian *ôbráz* or *îkôn*, (the latter is the Greek *εἰκών*;) a term which the translator has preferred to render "images."—T. B. S.

† Phominishna is "daughter of Phomá"—Thomas: the Great Princess Sophia was the daughter of Thomas, the last of the Paleolog.—T. B. S.

alas! I was even ashamed before the Almayne ambassador."

"Aristotle will build us a splendid temple for the Holy Virgin; we shall soon have artists . . . They shall build a palace—maison—~~for~~ thy boyarins. Five years—and thou wilt not know Moscow again."

"First let us root up the hedge and pull down the barrier; and then, if the Lord give me life, will we build us a royal dwelling—then will I be the Tsar of All Russia, not in name alone—then will I say, Verily God hath chosen for this his servant Iván. Yea, I will be a Tsar."

With these words the door flew open, and the Great Prince entered suddenly into the hall of the pillar, where Roussálka had found time to array his features in the necessary expression of servility.

Iván Vassilievitch was preparing to receive the Bishop of Tver, and a deputation of the chief men of that city, sent on an embassy to him by his brother-in-law, the Great Prince of Tver, Mikháil Bovísovitch. These envoys came from the younger brother, who had been deprived of his right of *equality*, to offer excuses on the occasion of the seizure of his correspondence with Kazimír, King of Poland. For this reception the Great Prince was dressed in various habiliments, of different names—in a rich *kaftán* of state, embroidered with figures of men—the wider this garment spread, the more beautiful and magnificent was it considered by our forefathers—his black hair fell richly from beneath a *kaphía* (close Tartar skull-cap) embroidered with pearls. On his breast hung a golden chain, suspending a large cross of cypress-wood, which contained fragments of a relic; on the middle finger of his right hand glittered a ring of gold, of filigree work, which, however, owed none of its splendour to the stone set in it, the latter appearing little better than a common pebble; but this stone Iván Vassilievitch would not have exchanged for gems of the purest water—it was a talisman, a present from his ally and friend, Mengli-Ghirei, Khan of Krim-Tartary, and which the latter had received from India. Thus, in the words of a chronicler ran the letter of Mengli-Ghirei, which accompanied this gift: "It is known to thee, that in the Indies, in the land called Kerditchen, there is a beast called an *Unicorn*, the horn whereof hath this virtue—he who beareth in his hand the horn, be he eating or drinking any thing, and if there be in what he eateth or drinketh any poison, the same shall do unto the man no hurt." For this reason a portion of the horn was set in a ring, and Iván Vassilievitch never took it off, guarding carefully the present of his ally, perhaps in anticipation of an attempt to poison him. The Prince threw a rapid fiery glance from under his black broad eyebrows upon the dvoretzkoí—a glance which few could bear, and which threw women of a weak constitution into a fainting fit. It seemed to embrace the minister from head to foot, and to read his very soul. On the other hand, the profound, almost religious, reverence with which Roussálka seemed to try to hide himself from that penetrating glance, was followed by the presentation of the staff and the kissing of the mighty hand. The bonnet Iván Vassilievitch did not take, but intimidated, by a nod, that the dvoretzkoí should place it on one of the stools. "Heard'st thou, dvoretzkoí, with what a lofty title I was greeted by the bird from beyond sea?" asked the Great Prince, clearing up his frowning brow.

In fact, the strange voice which had been heard by the dvoretzkoí was the cry of a parrot, sent by the German ambassador to the Great Princess Sophia Phomínishna. The daughter of the Paleologi, endowed by nature with a force of intellect and will which had been denied to her brothers, knew well how trifling a circumstance might suffice to decide her husband to complete the great work ripening in his vigorous mind. She had been the first to refuse openly to remain any longer the vassal of the Tartars. By demanding for her own use the lodging appropriated to the horde, and by this means ejecting them from the Kreml, Sophia had given the Great Prince the idea that their concessions had originated in conscious weakness, and that he might with as much ease expel them altogether from the Russian soil. Now, when Iván, having humbled Kazán, conquered Nóvgorod, and made conditions with the horde, began to meditate the complete liberation of his kingdom from a vassalage which fettered him within, and made him enemies without, Sophia, cunning and ambitious, was endeavouring, by various means, to render easy to him his unjust but unavoidable task; and for this purpose she had privately taught the foreign bird to salute him with the name of Tsar, which flattered him so much.

"'Tis plain the bird is a prophet, my lord!" said the austere courtier, carrying a stool towards the window, and placing a footstool covered with gold beneath the Great Prince's feet, and spreading a carpet over it. All this was performed at a sign from the glance and baton of the sovereign, so rapidly made that the eye could hardly follow their movements. But the dvoretzkoí lacked not activity. Whence came his dexterity? he was an old feeble man, whose soul seemed departing from his body.

On the covers of the seats were embroidered lions tearing serpents in pieces; and on the brocade for stools the double-headed eagle. This was a new object, and did not escape the Great Prince's observation. His black eyes sparkled with pleasure; for some time he admired the imperial snakes and bird, and before he seated himself on the stool, and placed his foot gently on the footstool, he said, with kindness—"And thou too, old dog, hast been conspiring with Phomínishna to please me."

The dvoretzkoí bowed low, stroking with his hand his ragged, pointed beard.

"O ho!" continued the Great Prince; "'tis easy to prepare imperial paraphernalia—to surround me with woven eagles and brocade lions—to teach popinjays to salute me as I wish—but to be a Tsar in word and deed is not so easy. Thou knowest well how much it cost me to struggle with my kinsmen. They sat down at a great table in the high places, and began to fall to. But I will not give them spoons, nor pass the wine: and yet there they sit, as if they were growing to their places."

"What are we to do, my lord, if they know not good manners?"

"Rap them on the pate, and away with them from table. Good faith, 'tis time! Let them cry—let them grumble—'He thinketh no shame to flay his kinsmen; he will pay for that in the other world!' No, I shall not have to pay for that. Before I was a brother, an uncle, a kinsman, I was lord of All Russia! When I appear before the awful judgment-seat of Christ, he will assuredly ask me—'Hast thou cared for the Russian land, whereof I made thee lord and father?'

"Didst thou unite, didst thou strengthen that Russia, weak, torn, and riven asunder?" This is what he will ask me, and not whether I drank from the same cup as my brothers and kinsmen; whether I patted them on the head; whether I coaxed them—they, and their kinsmen, and strangers—to suck the blood of Russia."

Iván Vassilievitch stopped, and looked at the dvoretzkoï, as if inviting a reply.

The other understood him, and said with a low reverence: "Vouchsafe me, my lord, Great Prince—me thy servant, to speak a foolish word."

"Speak a wise one: if thou givest me a foolish one I shall call thee fool."

Another bow: Roussálka accompanied it with the following discourse—"To him who entereth into marriage, the Lord commandeth to leave father and mother, and cleave only to his wife. Into the same state of marriage didst thou enter, Lord of All Russia, when thou receivedst by thy birth, and from the hands of a holy man in the house of God, a blessing on thy reign. Apply this precept to thyself, my lord; more wisely I cannot answer thy speech: I am neither deacon nor clerk."

"Thy clergy is in thy brain, Mikháil: 'tis well!"

As he pronounced these last words, the Great Prince leaned his chin on his arms, which he crossed on the top of his baton, and plunged into a deep reverie. Thus he passed some minutes, during which the dvoretzkoï dared not even to stir. It cannot be said that during these few minutes the angel of peace was hovering above them: in them the terrible demon of discord arose. During that pause was decided the fate of Tver, once the mighty rival of Moscow.

At length Iván Vassilievitch said—"Summon hither Mamón and my deacons."

The command was instantly obeyed: the dvoretzkoï returned immediately with his friend, already known to us, and three new faces.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LORD AND HIS HOUSEHOLD.

Twineth, twineth hóp-blossom,

Róund, around the póle—O! the silvery pole;

Só twine Princes and váliant Boyárin's,

Róund the noble Tsár, the true Christian Tsar.

Glóry!
Glóry!
Glóry!
Glóry!

On entering the izba of the square pillar, they all made the sign of the cross before the image of the Saviour, and then bowed low, very low, to the Great Prince. From the difference of their stature, they seemed as if they had come one out of the other, like a nest of boxes, or a set of drinking glasses for travelling. The tallest of the party was Feódor Kouritzin; this was a man a full head taller than Mamón, under fifty years of age, but looking older than he really was. Unremitted intellectual labour and care had bent his figure, and exhausted him into an appearance of ill health. On his bald head, behind the ears alone, there remained, as if for a sample, two or three pair of scattered sandy curls. His face was wasted, but the dimly gleaming eyes yet gave forth the fire of intellect; on his high and cavernous forehead God had plainly stamped the seal of lofty thoughts. He

was employed by the Great Prince in diplomatic affairs. Next followed Mamón. Then came the deacon, Volodímír Elizárovff Gáuseff, a man of business, a lawyer, who deserves the memory of posterity for his compilation of the *Soudébnik*, (code of laws.) The remaining person seemed as if he had been taken out of Kouritzin's bosom, so diminutive was he. In the kingdom of the Lilliputians he might perhaps have been made drum-major of the guards—for there he might have been considered a tall man, as he would have been superior to so many; but, among our huge countrymen, he would have hardly reached up to the shoulder of a little rifleman—so completely does every thing depend upon comparison. But one appendage to his person overshadowed the whole man—he almost realized the dwarfs of our nursery stories, of whom they say, they are no bigger than my nail, with a beard just like a horse's tail—a gigantic, a magnificent beard! From it the deacon was called Borodatii, (Beardie.) You are not, however, to suppose that all his merits were confined to this hairy ornament. No! his name has come down to us coupled with other qualities; for instance, he knew how to *speak*, as the chroniclers have it. These authors he had learned by heart; he had crammed himself with their writings as one loads a cannon, and wrote *finely*, as they called it in those days, or inflatedly, as we should say now, the history of his master's exploits. To him, too, was confided the task of instructing the clergy of the court in sacred singing; as an old historian phrases it—"dyvers manere of melodious dulcitude;" in a word, he was the human humming-bird of the court. Sweet was his song; he thrilled, hardly bending the bough on which he perched, and he feared not the pounce of hawk within his tiny nest. He was too small to attract the bird of prey.

"Well! . . . how goeth the matter of the Lithuanians?" was the Great Prince's stern enquiry to Mamón. By his expression, he was awaiting a bloody answer.

"Both the Prince Loukómskii, and the interpreter Matiphas, have confessed that they tried to poison thee at the command of Kazimír," replied Mamón, firmly. "To make trial, I gave some old women the poison: with one grain of it they swelled up, and a dog burst."

Iván Vassilievitch took off his tapha, crossed himself, and continued with fervour, turning towards the image of the Saviour—"I thank thee, O Lord and Saviour! for that thou hast vouchsafed to keep thy sinful servant from a violent death." Then applying his lips to his ring of *Kerditchén*, he added—"Thanks, too, to Mengli-Ghiréi: but for this, thy gift, it had been easy for the fiend to raise instigations, and to sow them even among kinsmen; now fear we our own kinsmen more than a stranger."

"Alas! our good lord and prince, think'st thou that we, thy faithful slaves, would permit that?" cried the dvoretzkoï and Mamón with one voice.

"The eye of the Lord watcheth over lawful rulers," said Góuseff, "and over thee chiefly, my Lord Great Prince, for the building up and weal of Russia."

The tiny deacon, Borodatii, sang, too, his panegyric through his nose; Kouritzin was silent.

Iván Vassilievitch continued, without seeming to hear the assurances of his courtiers: "Good faith—verily, a most mighty, noble, glo-

rious king! Worse than a heretic! A Christian king! He taketh not with force but with poison! Dare henceforward to bark—to say that I sought peace from interest, though of my own right I might claim our ancient province of Lithuania But be wary, Mamón; take care that there was no deceit in thine inquest—neither favour nor revenge!”

“Seven good witnesses, children of boyarins, kissed the cross with me; we have not sinned either before God or before thee, my lord.”

“’Tis well But what punishment, Volodímer Elizarovitch, is decreed in thy soudebnik against the felon who reacheth at another’s life?”

“In the soudebnik it is decreed,” replied Gónseff, “whoever shall be accused of larceny, robbery, murder, or false accusation, or other like evil act, and the same shall be manifestly guilty, the boyarin shall doom the same unto the pain of death, and the plaintiff shall have his goods; and if any thing remain, the same shall go to the boyarin and the deacon.”

“Ay, the lawyers remember themselves—never fear that the boyarin and deacon forget their fees. And what is written in thy book against royal murderers and conspirators?”

“In our memory such case hath not arisen.”

“Even so! you lawyers are ever writing leaf after leaf, and never do ye write all; and then the upright judges begin to gloze, to interpret, to take bribes for dark passages. The law ought to be like an open hand without a glove, (the Prince opened his fist;) every simple man ought to see what is in it, and it should not be able to conceal a grain of corn. Short and clear; and, when needful, seizing firmly! But as it is, they have put a ragged glove on law; and, besides, they close the fist. Ye may guess—odd or even! they can show one or the other, as they like.”

“Pardon, my Lord Great Prince; lo, what we will add to the soudebnik—the royal murderer and plotter shall not live.”

“Be it so. Let not him live, who reached at another’s life.” (Here he turned to Kourítzin, but remembering that he was always disinclined to severe punishments, he continued, waving his hand, “I forgot that a craven* croweth not like a cock.” (At these words the deacon’s eyes sparkled with satisfaction.) “Mamón, be this thy care. Tell thy judge of Moscow—the court judge—to have the Lithuanian and the interpreter burned alive on the Moskva—burn them, dost thou hear? that others may not think of such deeds.”

The dvoretzkoí bowed, and said, stroking his ragged beard—“In a few days will arrive the strangers to build the palace, and the Almayne leech: the Holy Virgin only knoweth whether there be not evil men among them also. Dost thou vouchsafe me to speak what hath come into my mind?”

“Speak.”

“Were it not good to show them an example at once, by punishing the criminals before them?”

The Great Prince, after a moment’s thought, replied—“Aristotle answereth for the leech Antony; he is a disciple of his brother’s. The artists of the palace—foreigners—are good men, quiet men but who can tell!

Mamón, put off the execution till after the coming of the Almayne leech; but see that the fetters sleep not on the evil doers!”

Here he signed to Mamón to go and fulfil his order.

“By the way, my lord,” said Roussalka, when his friend had departed, “where wilt thou that we lodge the Almayne?”

“As near as possible to my palace, in case of need.”

“Aristotle saith it would be a shame to lodge him in our izbás; but the only stone house in the neighbourhood is the voevoda’s—the house of Vassíli Fédorovitch Obrazétz. Thou thyself commandedst me to remind thee”

The Great Prince divined the meaning of the dvorétzkoí, and laughingly replied—“Well, Mikháil, right well ’twill not be over-pleasing to the boyárin; but still he will not be poisoned by the atmosphere of the Almayne. Let him know from whence cometh the bad weather.”

He stopped, and turned with an air of stern command to Kourítzin.

The latter had addressed himself to speak—“The ambassadors from Tver from the”

“From the prince, thou wouldst say,” burst in Ivan Vassílievitch: “I no longer recognize a Prince of Tver. What—I ask thee what did he promise in the treaty of conditions which his bishop was to negotiate?—the bishop who is with us now.”

“To dissolve his alliance with the Polish king, Kazimír, and never without thy knowledge to renew his intercourse with him; nor with thine ill-wishers, nor with Russian deserters: to swear in his own and his children’s name, never to yield to Lithuania.”

“Hast thou still the letter to King Kazimír from our good brother-in-law and ally—him whom thou yet callest the Great Prince of Tver?”

“I have it, my lord.”

“What saith it?”

“The Prince of Tver urgeth the Polish King against the Lord of All Russia.”

“Now, as God shall judge me, I have right on my side. Go and tell the envoys from Tver, that I will not receive them: I spoke a word of mercy to them—they mocked at it. What do they take me for? A bundle of rags, which to-day they may trample in the mud, and to-morrow stick up for a scarecrow in their gardens! Or a puppet—to bow down to it to-day, and to-morrow to cast it into the mire, with *Vuiduibái, father, vuiduibái!** No! they have chosen the wrong man. They may spin their traitorous intrigues with the King of Poland, and hail him their lord; but I will go myself and tell Tver who is her real master. Tease me no more with these traitors!”

Saying this, the Great Prince grew warmer and warmer, and at length he struck his staff upon the ground so violently that it broke in two.

“Hold! here is our declaration of war,” he added—“yet one word more: had it bent it would have remained whole.”

* *A jeu de mots* impossible to be rendered in English; Kourítzin, in Russia, is “a hen.”

* When Vladimir, to convert the Russians to Christianity, caused the image of their idol Perún to be thrown into the Dniépr, the people of Kieff are said to have shouted “*vuiduibái, bátiouchka, vuiduibái!*” —*bátiouchka* signifies “father,” but the rest of the exclamation has never been explained, though it has passed into a proverb.—T. B. S.

Kouritzin, taking the fatal fragments, went out. The philosopher of those days, looking at them, shook his head and thought—"Even so breaketh the mighty rival of Moscow!"

"God hath been merciful to me," continued the Great Prince, growing somewhat calmer: "Rostóff and Yaroslaff have renounced their rights: let us strike while the iron is hot. A word is but breath; but what is written with a pen deeds cannot blot out again,* as saith 'my little mannikin no bigger than my nail, with a beard flowing to his waist, just like a horse's tail.'"

The gigantic beard almost touched the ground, so low was the bow made by its diminutive owner.

"But thou art not the man, Beardikin, to finish this business; for thee 'twill suffice to dispatch a courier to the voevóda Daniél Khólm-skoi, at his estates, with my order to repair to Moscow without delay; and go to Obrazétz, and tell him, my servant, that I do him the grace to place in his house the Almayne leech who cometh hither anon, and command him to give him bread and salt,† and to treat him honourably. There is a heap I have piled on thee!"

"Zeal giveth strength," replied Borodáti; "mine would enable me to bear a ton of thy commands."

"Good!—And thou, Elizerovitch, ride thou to Rostóff and Yaroslavl, and bind firmly, with the knots of law, their gentle cession . . . Dost thou understand?"

"I understand, my lord."

Thus the Great Prince dismissed all his ministers of the household, except the dvorétzkoi. He had honoured Góuseff with the familiar appellation Elizerovitch, because his mission was a difficult one, to compel, by menaces and caresses, the Princes of Rostóff and Yaroslaff to yield up their territories to Ivan Vassilievitch; a cession at which they themselves had hinted. Rousselka remained, and looked enquiringly at the Great Prince, as if desiring to let him know that he had something to tell him.

"What wouldst thou?" enquired Ivan Vassilievitch.

"Dost thou vouchsafe to let me speak a word that I have long concealed? . . . I thought to bury it in my soul lest it might offend thee, my lord; but the Holy Virgin hath appeared to me thrice in a dream: she urged me, saying, Speak! speak!" . . .

"Speak, then! To the devil with thy grimaces; time is precious."

"Is it known to thee, that the Jewish heresy of the sorcerer Zakerií, hath come over hither from Névgorod? that it flourisheth here in Moscow? that many shepherds of souls are tainted with it? many boyarins near thy person are fallen into this heresy? that the chief leader among them is thy deacon Kouritzin, whom thou hast so much honoured with thy favour? Is it known to thee, that they are leading astray the faithful, and even—(he looked round to listen if any one overheard him, and then added softly) . . . even thy daughter-in-law."

"I know," coolly rejoined Ivan Vassilievitch, "that they busy themselves with the philosophical sciences—much good may it do them! Let them alone so long as they neglect not their duty; but if we listen to old wives' tales, we cannot boil a pot of *schi*, let alone rule an empire. As to Kouritzin, I forbid thee, or any one else, to say any evil of him. I can never forget what he hath done for me—my strong alliance with Mengli-Ghiréi, my league with the King of Hungary and the Hospodar of Moldavia—all is his work: and if I be strengthened by these alliances, and can now reach even at Lithuania, for all this I owe an obisance, yea, a low obisance, to Kouritzin. Be sure, I will remember good and evil to the brink of the grave, and I know how to repay both the one and the other. Do thou, talebearer as thou art, but a tithé of the good he hath done, and thou shalt know me."

"It was from devotion to thy person, my Lord Great Prince, that I spake. I could not hold my peace . . . The Christian people openly murmured against thee" . . .

At these words the eyes of Ivan Vassilievitch gleamed with a sullen fire. He started from his seat, clutched with a mighty hand Rousselka's throat, and shaking him, shouted, breathless with rage:—"People? . . . where is it? . . . Show it to me—let me hear it murmur, and I will throttle it as I do thee! Where is this people? Speak! Whence cometh it? . . . There is on earth a Russian monarchy, and all this, by God's blessing, lieth in me—in me alone! . . . Dost thou hear, rogue? Go, proclaim this every where . . . in the markets, in the churches, in every ward, in every hundred. Let it be cried . . . and if the voice of man be too weak, let it be clanged out by the balls, thundered forth by the cannon." (He hurled the dvorétzkoi from him, and began to stride up and down the izba with long steps.) "In good faith, a Christian people! . . . Is it not the same that crouched for two hundred years at the Tartar's foot, and bowed down to his wooden blocks; that kissed the hand of Névgorod, of Pskoff, of Lithuania; that cowered in the dust before any stranger that but lifted a stick over it! . . . I was the first to sober it from its foul, drunken fit. I set it on its feet, and said—'Stand up, come to thyself; thou art a Russian!' And this scum dareth to murmur against its lord! If I leave this people now, what would become of it! It would rot like a worm, beneath the foot of the first valiant passer-by! . . . Go, proclaim my favour to Kouritzin, to my faithful servant . . . say that I bestow on him a kafen of gold . . . dost thou hear? . . . from off my own shoulders. And say it so that this fair 'people' of thine may know it . . . Now, out of my sight, base pickthank!"

The dvorétzkoi threw himself at his sovereign's feet—"Mercy, my lord and father; my sins blinded me!" he cried. "Abate thy wrath, and I will do thee a service—thou wilt be pleased. . . . The Prince of Veréa is sick to death. A kinsman of mine came on purpose with these tidings. . . . Hasten, my lord, to send a courier before he render up his soul to God."

This intelligence went direct to the Great Prince's heart. He was thunderstruck. The son of the Prince of Veréa was living in exile in Lithuania. It was necessary for the imperial founder to lose no time in seizing his territories, lest he might be anticipated in doing so.

* The Russians are exceedingly fond of introducing in their conversation either old saws and proverbs, (which in all countries are generally rhymed,) or extempore sentences, with the jingle and antithesis of such proverbial expressions.—T. B. S.

† Bread and salt—the emblems of hospitality.—T. B. S.

by an enemy. "Sick," he added, changing countenance; "to death! saidst thou?"

"My kinsman saith that he cannot recover."
 "Ay, Mikháil, 'thou canst do me a service. I will never forget it. Thy brain is no dull one. . . . I know not how it came to go astray but now . . . The Evil One, 'tis plain, had entangled thee in old women's gossip . . . In truth, 'tis for the first time . . . and haply, 'twas not without some design. Rise . . . Thou art sure thou hast spoken to none of the prince's sickness?"

"As God see'th me, to none. Bury me alive in the earth if I have whispered it to any! I know it, and thou, my lord, and my kinsman; and him I assured that he would draw both me and himself into a noose if he uttered it."

"Then thou, my good Mikháil," (the Great Prince patted him on the head as a master caresses a clever pupil,) "speed thee now, this very instant, secretly to Veréia . . . We will say that thou art sick. Ride haste, post haste, kill a dozen horses if thou wilt, only find the Prince Mikháil Andréévitch alive . . . What thou wilt, find him but alive! . . . Flatter him, caress him, cant to him; if needful, frighten him . . . and bring me post-haste, a boxum letter, giving the Great Prince of Moscow his territory—all, without remainder forever—by reason of his son's disobedience."

And guilty was that unhappy son, who had married the niece of Sophia Phominishna, daughter of Andrew Paleologos, but only of having accepted from Sophia, some rich jewels, which had belonged to Iván's first wife; a present which the Great Prince had demanded back. These jewels were only needed by the Great Prince as a ground of quarrel. The young prince had purchased them dearly by the loss to Russia of Veréia, Yaroslávetz, and Báýlo-Ozero. "Wait not for instructions," continued Iván Vassilievitch. "Thou shalt have a hundred roubles—dost thou hear? a hundred roubles and my thanks."

As he said this, he trembled with eagerness.

A hundred roubles were dancing before the eyes of the greedy dvoretzkoï; but they did not deprive him of his habitual cunning. "And what if he stretch out his legs before I come?" he asked.

"He must not, he cannot . . . dost thou mark me? If he doth, come not back to me."

"I can make a dead man sign."

Here Roussálka finished his phrase with a gesture.

With the promise of a hundred roubles and favour he was dispatched to Veréia. And the late threatening storm—it had all passed away . . . How, then, had he committed the blunder of making his inopportune complaints? Was it a blunder? No, this was an artful commencement of his attack. It was expedient for him to support the members of Zakhárii's sect—they had bribed him. For the attainment of this object, it was far the most feasible course to speak against them, and take the side of their opponents—that is, of the populace. In this manner he could represent the people to the sovereign, jealous of his power, as a second power, which dared to oppose itself to him, though only by words. As he had calculated, so it turned out. The Great Prince was indignant against those who had dared to censure him. In case of personal danger, Roussálka had, *in pectus*, the news of the Prince of Veréia's

illness. And thus, on all points, he had played a winning game: from the sectarians he had received large presents; from Iván Vassilievitch a hundred roubles—a considerable sum at that time . . . and, above all, an augmentation of the Great Prince's favour. As to the kick, that was a thing he cared not about.

CHAPTER VII.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE STONE PALACE.

O, the court of the Tsar stands on seven versts,
 Stands on seven versts—on eight pillars tall.
 In the midst of the court, 't the midst of the square,
 There be three towers fair,
 Three towers fair, golden pinnaced:
 In the first tower shineth a golden sun,
 In the next tower shineth a gleaming moon,
 In the third tower shine starlets numberless.

In the centre of the *city**—namely, on the very spot where, even in our own memory, stood the stone cannon-yard, and which in its turn has been taken down—was situated the magnificent house of the Muscovite voevóda, the boyárin Vassíli Fëodorovitch Simskoi, surnamed Obrazétz. His mansion skirted on one side the small square, the centre of which was occupied by the church of St. Nicholas-of-the-Flax, at the turning below Konstantino-Yelengf'skaia Street, and on the other it abutted on the wall of the Kreml. The house being constructed of stone by the skill of foreign artists, and called by them a *palace* (palazzo,) the Russians of that epoch adopted the name of *palatii* (palace,) to designate a house of stone. At that time there existed but two of these—that of Obrazétz, and that of the mayor of Moscow.

It was chiefly the palace of the voevóda that the crowd went to admire. For some weeks it was besieged by them. And how could they but wonder? Children, whether in units, or as a crowd of units, love toys; and Obrazétz's house was a great stone toy, such as had never been seen in Russia. Not only were the walls as extensive as some streets in Moscow, but wondrous subtleties of art were carved on it wherever you looked, as if by the hand of a magician. The windows were small, and seemed, as it were by stealth, to pierce the walls, as though fearful of hurting the owner's eyes by too much light. Above and below each window were seen the palm branches which were strewed under the feet of Christ on Palm Sunday, and the bunches of grapes with which Noah made himself drunk. Thus the spectators expounded the external decorations of the house. All this was carved in stone, and displayed a wondrous skill. All the projections were decorated with yellow paint, and the hollows between them with light blue. 'Twas marvellously beautiful! The roof, of German iron, beaten out as thin as the leaf upon the tree, glittered like fire. Look into the court, and there are fresh wonders! Two flights of steps, descending on either side, seem to embrace the court-yard. These are covered by a kind of canopy, bordered with an architrave supported on twisted columns, such as are not to be seen even in the Great Prince's palace. A turret is fixed above along the roof, either by the skill of man or the power of the fiend, and hangs in the air like a swallow's nest: below it is at-

* The "city," in Moscow, is a comparatively small space near the Kreml, now occupied by the *gostinnoi dvor*, or bazar.

tached, somehow or other, a winding staircase. On three sides of the tower are windows, glazed with little round panes of glass, (no small wonder in those days :) when the sun shines on it, it looks like a lantern with a multitude of candles lighted in it. Look out of the window towards the Kreml, you will see the cannon-yard, the Red Square, the shops, Várskaia Street, and the Spass-v-Tchegaáskh beyond the Yaúza. Look from the middle window, you will behold the Great Street running along the bank of the Moskvá, the river with all its windings, from Símionoff monastery to Vorobéi Seló, and the whole of the city beyond the Moskvá, just as in a picture. Closer to you, along the town hill, extend izbás, one beyond the other, stretching to Konstantino-Yelenófskaia Street, and you can look into their courts as if into your own. Nearer yet, below you, lies the apple-garden, in which you can almost count every leaf. From the third window, the beautiful side of the city, from the Great Prince's palace to the Tainínskia gate, was painted, with all its churches, as if on the canvass. But, above all, you should see the mew in the court! The architect has raised on it a spire with a golden ball, that flashes in the sky.

Long was this considered to be the work of the Evil One; its owner, the voevóda, a companion in arms of Dániel Dmítrii Khólmskoi at the siege of Nóvgorod, and next to that celebrated leader in military renown, was assuredly no coward: this surname of Obrazetz (pattern or model) was given to him from his always fighting in the van of his troops; but when about to remove into his new house, a shudder came over his heart: he would rather have stricken battle, one against ten, with German men-at-arms, or Tartars, or volunteers of Nóvgorod, than face the evil spirit even in a single form. It is true, for his tranquillity and that of his family, every means had been employed to expel the unclean spirit that must have entered a house constructed by foreigners and infidel heretics. They had burned incense to such a degree that you could hardly breathe, had sung masses, and had sprinkled with Epiphany-water* every part of the house, habitable or not. They had fixed in all the passages and over every door and gate, copper crosses with holy images upon them, and chiefly with the effigy of St. Nikíta, who drives away the devil with his staff. In this way they hoped to secure their dwelling also from the future incursions of the unclean one: they held the house-warming feast on the day of St. Simeon the year-bringer, that is, on the first of September, which was considered new-year's day. They did not, however, forget the Chief *Master* of the house, the Domestic Genius, who is still called by this name in the villages. Without him, they say, the house cannot stand. The oldest w man in the family went to the hearth of the former dwelling, took some lighted coals in a potsherd from the stove—inviting, as she did so, *Somebody* to come out, and then rolled up the fire in a cloth; the gate was opened, Obrazetz with all his household came to meet the old woman with "bread and salt," bowed first slightly, then again, a third time, then a fourth, very

low; shook his hoary head, and invited *Somebody* into the new house, in the following words—"Grandsire, we beseech thee, come with us to a new abode." Then the door of the house was opened, the old woman released *Somebody* from the cloth into the new stove, placed there also the lighted coals, (not forgetting a supply of fuel for the mystic fire :) the bread and salt are set on the great table, the guests assemble, and the house-warming begins. The domestic Penates being thus installed, what is there to fear! they must only take care not to offend the house-spirit. The *Master* was once, and but once offended: he took a dislike to a black charger which the boyarin had lately bought. Once he scared him all night long, rode him like a hundred hell cats, tore out the hair of his mane, and kept blowing into his ears and nostrils. They soon guessed that the *Master* was displeased; to quiet him, they sold the horse, and kept no more black ones. They also hung up a bear's head in the stable, to prevent any houseless spirit from fighting with the *Master*, and gaining any advantage over him. At length the house spirit was appeased, and the inmates of the Stone Palace enjoyed all the benefits of his paternal care.

Yes, Russia was then filled with *enchantment*. A host of prejudices and superstitions, survivors of the infancy of the world—the mythic age, spirits and genii, flying in multitudinous swarms from India and the far north, formed alliance with our giants and jesters; princesses, princes, knights of the west, brought hither in the wall-ets of Italian artists: all these peopled at that epoch houses, forests, and air, and rendered our Russia a kind of poetic world, a creation of enchantment. Spirits greeted the new-born infant at its entrance into life, rocked it in the cradle, wandered with the child as he gathered flowers in the meadow, splashed him as he paddled in the streamlet, hallooed to him in the woods, and led him to the labyrinth where our earthly The-senses were to vanquish the foul Minotaur, the demon of the wood, by turning their coat inside out,* or by charms purchased of an old woman, our Russian Medea. Spirits were throned in the eyes. The Evil Eyes, whose glance alone could bring misfortune, fell like shooting-stars on the woman who yielded herself up to soft midnight reverie; troubled the wicked in their graves, and came forth in the form of the evil-doer from the tomb, to scarce the midnight passenger, if good Christians had not remembered to drive a stout stake through the coffin. All unusual accidents, all ill-luck and violent passions, were the work of spirits.

In an atmosphere thus breathing enchantment, lived the family of Obrazetz, composing that household which we are about to visit.

Read through the chronicles of this period, and you will more than once encounter the name of Obrazetz among the warriors who fought against Nóvgorod, the Lithuanians, and the Tartars. Look upon Vassilii Feodorovitch when sixty years had strewn his head with snow, and you will say that glance, sparkling with fire, must have fallen upon the enemy like the ire of the eagle; that giant arm, waving the falchion, must have levelled ranks of dead before it: that broad and grizzled chest, that Herculean stature, were created to be a bulwark of war. Having

* It is pretty well known, that one of the most peculiar and striking ceremonies of the Russian church is the solemn blessing of the waters on the day of the Epiphany. A portion of the water so consecrated is preserved in every house for the whole year, and is supposed to possess very great virtues; in particular it is held, when drunk or sprinkled, to be an antidote to the effects of magic and the evil eye.—T. B. S.

* To avert the evil consequences attendant upon the meeting with the *Laysarkh*, the Russian wood-demon, it was necessary to turn the shuba inside out. The same superstition is found in Scotland and England.—T. B. S.

paid to his country his tribute of service as a warrior, for which he was rewarded with the dignity of boyárin, a rank then very rarely conferred, he paid a second tribute, as a courtier, to the Great Prince, by erecting, to gratify him, a stone palace. Here he lived quietly, hitherto undisturbed by Iván, beloved by his friends, respected by the people, a kind father, a stern but benevolent master; here he hoped to devote the last years of his life to calm retirement, and to prepare himself for eternity by the practice of religion and charity. Raised above the crowd by rank and wealth, he was, however, by no means exempt from its prejudices; he loved his neighbour according to the law of Christ, but under that title he included his countrymen alone: whatever was not Russian, was with him on the level of a dog: the Italians—or *foreigners* as they were called at that time—he suffered in his house, and honoured with his society, because they had built, or were preparing to build, churches to God; the Bolognese architect, Albert Fioraventi, otherwise called Aristotle, he respected as an engineer, as the future builder of the Cathedral of the Assumption, and still more as the father of a child who had been christened after the Russian rite. But the Germans, the unbelieving Germans, he abhorred with all the strength of a soul—fierce, indeed, but not malicious. This sentiment in him, finding its source in popular prejudice, was still further strengthened by a particular event; he could never pardon the Germans for the death of a beloved son, who had been killed before his eyes. This son had but recently completed his sixteenth year, the ceremony of the *postriga** had only just been performed on him, when his father had enticed him from his mother's side to the war against the Livonians. How he admired his warrior-beauty, shadowed by the plumed helm, his youthful fire and bravery, which gave the promise of his one day becoming a renowned chief! and this beauty, this pride, this hope, was mown down in an instant by the steel of a foul heretic. Years passed on; but ever in the old man's dreams rose the image of his beauteous stripping, as, streaming with blood, he raised from the dust his head, clouded with the shadow of death, crossed himself, and threw on the father a look . . . a farewell look. Then the enemy's horses had trampled him under their hoofs. O! the father would never forget that look—to his last gasp he would remember it. Never would he forget the mother's cry, calling on him to render account what he had done with her darling child. She had not long survived her bereavement. Henceforth Obrazetz revenged this loss upon all the Germans, by a hatred which for them could know no pity. As to the slayer of his son, he had not broken his mace of arms on his head—no, he had made him prisoner, bound him to his horse's tail, and galloped through the forest, dragging him over stock and stone, till he had left nothing of his foe but bloody tatters to feast the wolves. He concealed not his detestation of the German even in the Great Prince's presence. On one occasion, in the very audience-chamber, he had called the Knight Poppel, the German ambassador, a foul heretic. It was with difficulty that they ap-

peased the wrath of Iván Vassilievitch; the Great Prince, who insisted that all should respect those whom he deigned to honour, and should dislike whatever he did not love, retained in his mind the memory of this insult, notwithstanding the great services of Obrazetz.

The voevóda had still a son, Iván Khabár-Simskoi—(Remark, that in those times, children frequently did not bear the name of their father, or, when they did, bore an additional designation. These surnames were given either by the Great Prince, or by the people, for some exploit or some bad action, and generally indicated some bodily or mental quality)—Iván Khabár, then about twenty-two or twenty-three years old, tall, black-browed, black-eyed, handsome; in a word, the model of a young Russian gallant. He had, on more than one occasion, shown his courage before the enemy; he had accompanied the volunteers of Souroj against Viatka, and against the Mórdvui-na Lejákh; he wasted his valour in brawls with his countrymen, in night forays, in the life of a hot-headed scapegrace—"Ho, Iván, thy pate is not over firm upon thy shoulders!" his father would often say. "Twill last long enough for me, father!" was his answer. Often did the sire shut his eyes to his son's pranks, in the hope that his boiling, vehement spirit would subside, and, like a torrent swelled by rain, return in due time to its banks: the bounds fixed by God, thought he, no man can pass; thou canst not outride thy destiny. The young steed, though he may have a spice of the devil in him, will yet be a destrier; the jade—even when a colt—is nothing but a jade.

But the old man's best consolation and hope; the treasure which he was never weary of gazing on, was his daughter Anastasia. The fame of her loveliness had spread all through Moseow, far beyond the walls of her parental dwelling, the lofty enclosure and the bolted gates. The female connoisseurs in beauty could find no fault in her, except that she was somewhat too slight and flexible, like a young birch-tree. Aristotle, who in his time had beheld many Italian, German, and Hungarian beauties, and who enjoyed frequent opportunities of seeing Anastasia—the artist Aristotle used to affirm, that he had never encountered any thing so lovely. "The Signorina Anastasia," he would say, "though, by her fair complexion, evidently a child of the snowy North, by the splendour of her dark eyes, by the voluptuous languor which is shed around her form, is exactly like one of my own countrywomen. Were I a painter, I would take her to personify the glowing Aurora when about to plunge into the embrace of her burning bridegroom." The artist always stopped to gaze on her with singular rapture. Iván the Young, the Great Prince's eldest son by his first wife, one day ran unexpectedly into Obrazetz's garden, in sportive pursuit of Khabár-Simskoi, for whom he had a great regard, and finding there his friend's sister, stood before her like one in a dream, like a man thunderstruck. He had entertained the intention of espousing her; but his ambitious father, who sought in the marriages of his children, unions, not of affection, but of policy, forced him to the altar with Helena, daughter of Stephen, hospodar of Moldavia, (converted to our faith as Voevóda of Vallachia, whence the bride was called Helena Voloshanka of Vallachia.) The old women—who know every thing, are sure of every thing—the witches discovered that the young

* *Postriga*, cutting the hair; a religious ceremony equivalent to the assumption of the "virile gown" (also accompanied by cutting the hair) among the Romans; it was performed at the age of sixteen, after which the boy was supposed fit for war &c.—T. B. S.

Prince had exactly at that time begun to pine and languish; he never ceased to cherish the closest attachment to Khábar, in which perhaps another feeling was concealed.

Anastasia was altogether, in body and soul, something wonderful. From her very infancy Providence had stamped her with the seal of the marvellous; when she was born a star had fallen on the house—on her bosom she bore a mark resembling a cross within a heart. When ten years old, she dreamed of palaces and gardens, such as eye had never seen on earth, and faces of unspeakable beauty, and voices that sang, and self-moving dulcimers that played, as it were, within her heart, so sweetly and so well, that tongue could never describe it; and, when she awoke from those dreams, she felt a light pressure on her feet, and she thought she perceived that something was resting on them with white wings folded; it was very sweet, and yet awful—and in a moment all was gone. Sometimes she would meditate, sometimes she would dream, she knew not what. Often, when prostrate before the image of the Mother of God, she wept; and these tears she hid from the world, like some holy thing sent down to her from on high. She loved all that was marvellous; and therefore she loved the tales, the legends, the popular songs and stories of those days. How greedily did she listen to her nurse! and what marvels did the eloquent old woman unfold, to the young, burning imagination of her foster child! Anastasia, sometimes abandoning herself to poesy, would forget sleep and food; sometimes her dreams concluded the unfinished tale more vividly, more eloquently far.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TALE-TELLER AND THE MESSENGER.

WE have already said that the Feast of St. Hierasimus was come. It was noon. Vassili Feodorovitch Obrazetz, having been reposing, according to the Russian custom, after dinner, was about to wash his face, which was heated with sleep. This was done, without the assistance of a servant, in a copper hand-basin, the present of the famous Aristotle; the utensil was fixed above a tub, as clean and bright as if it had just left the carpenter's hands—a wondrous gift! Touch but a handle at the bottom, and water gushes forth as from a fountain. Then he took a towel bordered with fine lace, the work of Anastasia, which was hanging on a nail ready for the hand of its owner. A horn comb, dipped in *quass* mixed with honey, was passed through the hoary locks of his hair, rendering them smooth and flat. Whether this operation was well done or not, he could not ascertain himself; for in those times a mirror had been seen by few. Aristotle had indeed given a fragment of looking-glass to Anastasia; but when the inmates of the Stone Palace looked into it, and—defend us from the foul fiend!—turning their faces toward it, they saw the Evil One reflected in their eyes, and mocking at them, they threw away the enchanted mirror, without saying any thing about it to the foreigner. Having arranged his hair, the old man put on a summer dress, and went into a chamber which he called his armory. This was an apartment of tolerable size. On the walls, which were decorated with glazed bricks, were suspended steel

caps of coarse workmanship; breastplates, some inlaid with silver, and others common; iron ones, stained with rust in bloody spots; kanjars (a weapon of the sword or dagger species, rather smaller than the former, and larger than the latter), some of which, by their delicate carvings in gold and other ornaments, were evidently of Eastern origin; spears and pikes; the *shesto-pior*,* the ensign of the rank of *voevóda*, similar to the modern marshal's baton; and several iron shields with square flutings. In the angle of one corner hung the image of St George the Victorious; at a short distance from the wall were two benches covered with drapery of cloth, and between them an oak table, exquisitely clean, with carved feet and drawers; on this stood the great mazer-cup, and the silver measure, with the accompanying silver ladle. Before the table, in the *place of honour*, all resplendent with arabesques, was placed a magnificent chair of honour, shaped like those arm-chairs that fold up, the invention and masterpiece of some foreigner.

Obrazetz filled up the measure with foaming amber-mead, and had hardly drained it, when the knock of a stranger resounded on the door-post of the outer gate. The bark of the house-dog was heard; it was evident, from the master's face, that the person who arrived was an expected guest. This was speedily proved; two visitors entered unannounced. One was an old man of short stature, already beginning to bend beneath the weight of years; dark locks were still mingled sparingly with his silver hair; from the top of his head to the corner of his left eye, was trenched a deep gash but you have already recognized, I daresay, the tale-teller and traveller, Aphanasii Nikitin. Let us only remark, that he now appeared ten years younger than when we saw him in the prison of Dmitrii Ivánovitch, though there was to elapse between this present period and that, a space of more than twenty years. It is necessary to add, that his face now bore recent traces of a tropical sun, acquired during his late journey to India; and that this strong sunburnt brown tint gave him, at the end of winter, an expression unusual in a Russian. I know not whether I remarked in my first tale about him, that goodness of heart was painted vividly in his countenance. The other visitor was a lad under fourteen, handsome and lively. In his large blue eyes, you might plainly see that intellect was always awake in this favourite of Providence. He held up his head with a kind of noble dignity and self-reliance. The curls of his fair hair had reluctantly submitted to the scissors; they were cut round in the Russian fashion, but nevertheless they obstinately twined, and formed a sort of coronal of ringlets on his head. Both the old man and the boy wore the Russian habit; but the clothes of the former were poor, while those of his young companion were of fine German cloth, and trimmed with sable. Notwithstanding this apparent inequality in their condition, the latter yielded precedence to the former, whenever he had an opportunity of showing respect. Both, on entering the apartment,

* *Shesto-pior* (literally, "six-feather")—a weapon, and at the same time the ensign of command, of the *voevóda* or general, similar to the marshal's baton of our days. It resembled the *masse-d'armes* of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, being an iron staff, with a knob at the end, armed with prongs of iron. Many of these instruments, some richly gilded and inlaid, are preserved in the armory of Moscow.—T. B. S.

made three signs of the cross before the image, pronouncing the words—"Lord, have mercy!" and then bowing to the master of the house, with the salutation—"God give you health!" The elder stopped and left his staff near the door.

"Welcome, Andrióusha!" said Vassilii Féodorovitch, seating himself with luxurious deliberation on his chair, which creaked under his portly weight, and kissing the top of the boy's head; then turning to the old man, he continued—"Right welcome, Aphónia; sit down in the best place; honour be given every where to the tale-teller and traveller. Entertain us now with an account of the way they make war in the Indies, olopervódiger."

In employing this barbarous word, Obrazetz meant to jest with the tale-teller, who was fond of introducing into his stories strange-sounding phrases, which he called Hindostane.

"The veteran voevóda is like an old falcon, which, though no longer able to fly after its prey, yet struggleth towards it, and flappeth its wings. Be it related as thou wilt, boyárin; thy words are commandments. We will not throw thy bread and salt into the dirt," replied the old man, seating himself cautiously on the bench; "but I must beware lest I dirty the cover, my lord; methinks, 'tis fine cloth from over-sea."

"If thou dost, we will put on another; and we have plenty. Now, how fareth thy father?" added Obrazetz, holding the boy between his knees, and laying his hand on his shoulder.

"He is ever sad; Iván Vassilievitch will not give him enough ground for the cathedral."

"I suppose, then, he would take in the whole city?"

"Nay, he who would build a temple to the Creator of the World ought not to lack space," replied the youth proudly.

"I love Andréi for his wise speech!" cried the boyárin with affection. "But it is of no use to waste time in vain. Run to thy godmother, and bring her hither, to hear the tales of the traveller Aphanasii Nikitin."

And Andréi, the son of the architect Aristotle, flew to fulfil the boyárin's bidding. From the chamber, which for the present we shall call the armoury, folding-doors of iron, capable of being closed with a bolt, but now open, led to a dark corridor, from whence a flight of steps, with a balustrade, ascended to the apartment of Anastasia. On the other side, from the boyárin's back chambers in the right wing of the house, another staircase wound up to the same room, and both met in the well-warmed upper hall which divided Anastasia's chamber from her nurse's room.

Andréi, on reaching this antechamber, knocked at a door covered with felt, and making his voice as harsh and at the same time as plaintive as he could, sang—

"Little children frank and free,
Ope the gate now hostile;
'Tis your mother, come and see!
Mother bringing milk for ye."*

An agreeable voice was heard from within—"How thou scaredst me, little wolf . . . what wouldst thou?"

The ambassador then explained the object of his mission; the click of the latch was heard, and Anastasia appeared, carrying a little cushion for working lace. Delight was painted on

her beautiful countenance. "Welcome, my dove!" she said, kissing her godson on the forehead. He took the cushion from her, and both, like a pair of birds, flew to the armoury. "How fareth it with thee, father?" asked Anastasia, bowing low to the traveller, as she hastened to place herself, with her work, close to him on the bench. Her godson seated himself on a stool at the feet of Obrazetz.

"With the help of your prayers, we creep along reasonably well at a foot's pace," replied Aphanasii Nikitin; "and dost thou still roll, as of old, my round pearl, in thy father's palm? Are ye seated, lordings, and ready to hear once more the wanderings of a sinful traveller over three seas, blue and wavy? The first sea, keep in mind, the sea of Derbénd, or the Caspian ocean; second sea, the Indian, or the ocean of Hindostan; the third, the Black Sea, the ocean of Stamboul."

These seas were the Tveritchánin's "*cheval de bataille*"; they served sometimes as a keynote, sometimes as a prelude, to his tales.

"We are seated," said Obrazetz; and all was attention.

How charmingly these four figures were grouped! How noble was the aged man, free from stormy passions, finishing the pilgrimage of life! You seemed to behold him in pure white raiment, ready to appear before his heavenly judge. Obrazetz was the chief of the party in years, in grave majestic dignity, and patriarchal air. Crossing his arms upon his staff, he covered them with his beard, downy as the soft fleece of a lamb; the glow of health, deepened by the cup of strong mead, blushed through the snow-white hair with which his cheeks were thickly clothed; he listened with singular attention and delight to the story-teller. This pleasure was painted on his face, and shone brightly in his eyes; from time to time a smile of good-humoured mockery flitted across his lips, but this was only the innocent offspring of irony which was raised in his good heart by Aphónia's boasting (for very few story-tellers, you know, are free from this sin). Reclining his shoulders against the back of his arm-chair, he shut his eyes, and, laying his broad hairy hand upon Andrióusha's head, he softly, gently dallied with the boy's flaxen locks. On his countenance the gratification of curiosity was mingled with affectionate tenderness: he was not dozing, but seemed to be losing himself in sweet reveries. In the old man's visions arose the dear never-forgotten son, whom he almost fancied he was caressing. When he opened his eyes, their white lashes still bore traces of the touching society of his unearthly guest; but when he remarked that the tear betraying the secret of his heart had disturbed his companions, and made his daughter anxious, the former expression of pleasure again dawned on his face, and doubled the delighted attention of the whole party. Picturesque, too, was the story-teller—the Polyphemus—that wonder amid the ignorance of his countrymen—driven by the spirit of knowledge from the cradle of the Volga to the source of the Ganges—from the trader's shop under the wall of the Church of the Saviour, to the temple where they bowed down before the golden bull; and who knew not that he had achieved an exploit which might have given him a glorious name in a civilized country? He recounted his adventures, sometimes with the simplicity, sometimes with the slyness, of a child: O, and he surely must be

* A verse of the Russian nursery-tale, answering to our "Little Red Riding-hood." It is, of course, the wolf's request for admittance.

among the number of those whom our Lord loved to fondle; and of whom he said, "hinder them not to come unto me!" The daughter of Obrazetz, too, a young, lovely creature, who had excited a feeling of admiration in the artist, who was learned in the beautiful—herself ignorant the while that she was so fair, innocent, inexperienced, yet full of life swelling to burst its bounds. See how her hands, quitting the unfinished flower, are lifted and held up in the attitude of wonder! She is all attention; she accompanies the traveller step by step along the banks of the Ganges; her face seems to burn with the sun of India; her eyes, following her imagination, appear to devour the distant space. The boy, too, brought from the orange groves of Ausonia, from the gondola rocking to the harmonious love-song on the waves of the Adriatic, to the snow-wreaths of Muscovy, to find there a new country with new faith and customs, with what pleasure does he abandon himself to the caresses of Obrazetz—though they, he knows, belong not to him! With what attention he listens to the traveller's tale! No childish allurements, no gift or play, so fascinating at his age, could tear him from the society of his elders. Already, to a degree far beyond his years, did he sympathize with all that is good, great, and glorious; like a young steed at the trumpet-note, he seems ready to dash into the strife against injustice and violence. How warm is this domestic picture! With what a chiaroscuro of household happiness, of quiet, innocent habits, is it illuminated! It is like some patriarchal family lighted up by the lamp burning before the image of the heavenly babe.

We have said that all was attention; but we must explain how the following prelude introduced the actual story:—

When his hearers were all seated, Aphánasii Nikitin asked the daughter of Obrazetz whether she remembered what he had formerly told her.

"God keep me from forgetting!" cried Anastasia—"Thou recountest so well, grandfather, that all seemed real before my eyes. If thou wilt, I will repeat it again, in brief. Thou departedst from thy native city, Tver; from the golden dome of our Holy Saviour, protected by him—from the Great Prince Mikháil Borissovitch, and from the Archbishop Gennádus. Then didst thou float down the Volga, and receivedst, at Kaliázin, the benediction of the Abbot Makárii. At Nijnii-Névgorod thou awaitedst the Tartar ambassador, who was returning to his own land from our Great Prince Iván with falcons: there thou wert joined by certain of our Russes, who were minded, like thee, to go forth into distant lands, and with them thou descendedst the rest of the Volga. On a certain river ye were fallen upon by Tartars; and between you and them arose a bloody skirmish; and many of your company laid their heads in the dust. Here they gashed thee, poor man, on the forehead and eye! It is not in vain that I love not these Tartars, even as though my heart boded ill from them even to myself."

"To me there is no nation more foul than the Almaynes!" burst in the boyárin, who never missed an opportunity of expressing his hatred to them.

Anastasia continued—"The sea of Derbénd, thou saidst, grandfather, is bottomless. When the mermaids are sporting in it, and combing the waves with their silver combs, you fly over it like a white-winged swan; but when they lie

at the bottom warily, and take hold of the ship, then stand you still in one place, as though you were chained there. Neither dost breeze blow nor wave wash. By day the heaven blazeth above thee, and the sea beneath thee; by night the Lord stringeth the sky with stars, like golden coins, and the mermaids strew the waters with like stars; but when they are angered they begin to rock the ship, and lift it up, up, up! so high, that thou thinkest thou canst reach the stars, and then plunge it to the bottom, and dash it to chips against a rock, unless ye hasten to repeat, 'Lord, have mercy upon us!' At the mere thought, my heart sinketh within me: yet should I love to glide over that sea, like a grey duck or a snow-white swan."

"Ah! thou art my sweet-voiced swallow, my fluttering bird!" interrupted the traveller; "I could almost think thou hadst flown with me over the sea. 'Tis true, much woe and sorrow have I borne; I, a sinful servant of God. 'Tis well said in the adage, Desire is stronger than force. I was no bigger than Andréi Aristotle, ere I had travelled all over the principality of Tver. There, as soon as summer came, I went with the pilgrims wherever they wandered, or joined a train of waggons with merchandise; when I grew up, there was no end to my projects: to go far, far away, to the borders of the world—to behold, with my own eyes, all that is done on God's earth: what beasts, birds, men, live in different countries—all this I longed to behold; even as if—God forgive me!—some spirit possessed me, and commanded me to wander; and even now—now that I am peacefully sitting in holy Russia, in the white stone palace—safe and warm, on cushions of cloth, with a boyárin, a giver of bread and salt, (hospitable,) and drinking his sweet mead—shall I confess it, my gracious patrons?—even now my heart yearns to wander far away, o'er thrice nine lands, and thrice ten distant kingdoms. I have been to the rising of the sun, and now I am pining to behold his setting: sickness hath prevented me. . . . But let us return to my poor wanderings beyond three seas—the blue, olopervódiger, and the first sea."

The impatient Anastasia interrupted his recital. "We remember, grandfather, we remember thou hast suffered much woe and sorrow: those of thy company who had any thing to do in Russia, returned to Russia; but he that had nothing to draw him home, went whither his eyes led him. Thou wentest to Bakóu, where there blazeth out of the ground an inextinguishable fire—Lord, Lord, how wonderfully is thy world made! And then thou passedst Easter-day at Gourmuz, where the sun scorseth a man like boiling oil: at last thou didst arrive in the chief city of the great Sultan of the Indies: in that land there be apes, with the hands and feet and wit of man; only they speak not as we do: these apes live in the forest, and they have an ape prince. If any man offend them, they complain to their prince: they fall upon a town, pull down the houses, and kill the people. There is also in that land the bird *houcouck*; it dieth at night, and crieth gouk, gouk, and when it percheth on a house, there a man will die. If any man try to kill the bird, fire cometh out of its mouth."

On a sudden, at these words, was heard touk, touk, as if a bird was tapping with its beak, and then the croak of a raven. The girl stopped short in her tale; all except Andriousha looked

at each other and crossed themselves, ejaculating—"The strength of the cross be with us! O Lord, save us from evil!"

The gay face of the boy, and his reputation for tricks, soon dissipated their fear: when they recovered themselves, Aphánasii Nikítin, coughing, took up the tale where the boyárin's daughter had left off. "The land of Hindostan is right populous and right glorious," he began . . .

"Thou hast again wandered from the point of how they make war in the Indies," interrupted the voevóda, desirous that a relation of military affairs should lead his mind away from the gloomy impression produced by the cry of the raven.

"In a moment, my good lord, I will bring my tale to that. Now, the first sea, the sea of Der-bend" . . .

"The Caspian ocean, ollopervódiger," broke in Andriúsha, laughing. "We knew all that, grandfather, long ago."

The voevóda shook his finger at the boy. Anastasia reminded the traveller where he had left off, and he continued as follows:

"The Soldan is carried in a golden litter: above it is a velvet canopy with a golden top, and over all blazeth a ruby as large as a hen's egg. Before the Soldan are led about twenty horses harnessed to golden sledges. Behind him, three hundred men on horseback, five hundred on foot, and trumpeters, and players on the dulcimer, harpers and fifers, ten of each. But when he rideth out for pleasure with his mother and his wife, he hath with him ten thousand horsemen and fifty thousand footmen, three hundred elephants, caparisoned in gilded trappings, with castles fixed thereon; and in each castle six men-at-arms, with cannon and arquebuses. On the great elephants ride twelve men, and on each are two standards. To their tusks are tied great swords, a quintal in weight, and to their trunks great iron clubs. Between the ears of the elephant sitteth a man-at-arms with an iron crook to guide the elephant withal. Before him go trumpeters and dancers by the hundred; and three hundred common horses, harnessed to golden sledges. Behind these are a hundred apes and a hundred concubines. The Soldan himself is habited in a robe all covered with rubies, a turban with a great diamond thereon; in the sunshine it dazzleth the eyes, even as the lightning. He weareth a quiver adorned with jacinths, and three swords all damasked with gold. His saddle is of gold, and his stirrups of gold—all is gold. Behind him goeth a royal elephant, all trapped in brocade, and bearing in his mouth an iron chain, to beat down horses and men who approach too near the Soldan. In the Soldan's palace there be seven gates, and at each gate stand a hundred guards, and a hundred kafir scribes; whosoever goeth in or goeth out, they write him down. And his palace is right wonderful, being all carved work and gold, and sculptured even to the top, wonderful to be seen. Their *Bout-khans* (Temples of Buddh) are without doors, and look towards the east; the *Bout* is carved in black stone, right great, having a tail spreading over him. He holdeth up his right hand, stretching it forth like *Ouslenian* (Justinian,) the Tsar of Tsargrad (Emperor of Constantinople:) in his left hand he beareth a spear, and there is no clothing on his body; his visage and back are like those of an ape. Before the Bout standeth a bull, very huge, carved of black stone, and all gilded; his horns are

bound with brass; around his neck hang three hundred little bells, and the hoofs thereof are shod with brass. They kiss his hoof, and scatter flowers over him. Within the Bout-khan they ride on bulls. The Indians call the bull father, and the cow mother. Their *anamaz* (prostrations and prayers) are made toward the East: they lift up both their hands, and place them on the crown of their head, then they bow to the earth, and prostrate themselves on the ground. This is their worship. The Indians eat not any manner of flesh; neither oxen, nor sheep, nor fish, nor swine. When they eat any thing, they hide themselves from heretics, lest any one should look into their drinking-vessel or their food; and, if a heretic looketh at any thing, they will not use it for food. When they eat, they cover themselves with a cloth, lest they be seen of any man. When they sit down to meat, they wash their hands and feet, and rinse their mouths; and, if any man die among them, they burn him, and sprinkle his ashes on the water" . . .

Long, long tales told the one-eyed traveller about the manners and customs of the Hindoos, and at last he came to the manner of making war in the Indies. Then was heard suddenly the sound of the iron ring which announced the arrival of a stranger, breaking the thread of the story. This was followed by the clatter of a horse's hoofs, and immediately after by the bustle of domestics in the court-yard and the hall. Khabár-Simskoi rushed into the armory, and was about to speak, but was interrupted by his father—"Art thou preparing to turn heretic, Iván, that thou comest into a room without crossing thy brow, or saluting the good people! Would a bow make thy head fall off?"

The son of Obrazatiz blushed, and hastened to make three signs of the cross before the image, and a bow to the traveller and Andrei; then, standing in a respectful attitude, he said—"The matter calleth for haste . . . Here is the deacon Borodátii from Iván Vassilievitch."

"Since when hath hot-brain begun to fear the Tsar's deacons? Hast thou been falling into some scrape?"

"If I had, I would not bend for mercy even to the Great Prince."

"With such thoughts as these, 'twill not be long ere thou fallest under the axe."

"Then would I bow my head: 'twould only be to my mother, the damp earth: but now evil hath fallen, not on me, but on our house. The deacon is come with an order from our lord, and hath told me" . . .

The boyárin did not allow his son to finish: "Let him tell me himself. . . 'tis clear, 'Long beard, short wit.' Order the slaves to receive the messenger of our lord, and go thyself to meet him with honour." While the father and son were talking, Anastasia, her godson, and the tale-teller, had disappeared from the armoury. The boyárin, having put on a better dress than that in which he was, returned to receive the deacon. The latter did not keep him waiting long. First loomed into sight the gigantic beard, and then the man humming-bird, introduced by Khabár himself with ceremonious respect.

"Our lord Great Prince, ruler of All Russia, Iván Vassilievitch," said, or to speak more properly, sang, through the nose, our little deacon—"hath dispatched from his august presence me, his unworthy slave, to announce to thee, boyárin, that there cometh hither from Almayne the

leech Antony—very skilful in the cure of all diseases: he is now but three days' journey from Moscow; and therefore our mighty lord hath vouchsafed that this leech, in case of any evil hap . . . from which may God . . . may the angels and archangels fan from him with their wings, even as . . . whereupon . . . the which" . . .

The orator was confused, and lost the thread of his speech; but after a moment's reflection, he continued, in a firm voice—"Our great lord had vouchsafed that this Almayne leech, Antony, should remain near his high person; and therefore he hath granted to thee, boyárin, of his grace, to receive the Almayne into thy palace as an inmate, and to choose the best chamber and hall therein" . . .

You ought to have seen the expression of the boyárin's face on hearing this command. He turned pale, his lips quivered. A German—a foul German! a heretic! a Latiner!* one of his son's murderers! to dwell under his roof—to profane the purity of his house! to shame his old age! . . . but what was to be done? He must receive the abhorred inmate, even with bread and salt—with compelled honour. Such was the Great Prince's will. Obrazéts, had he even been ignorant that Iván Vassilievitch loved to bend whatever resisted him, and had never found a spirit so iron as not to yield and fashion itself at his pleasure, even then he would not have dared to disobey. The name of the sovereign, second only to that of God, was respected by him as in the olden times, according to the precepts of his forefathers.

"I, and all of mine, are God's and the Tsar's," replied the boyárin, restraining his feeling: "choose in my poor house whatever chambers please ye."

"Only not my sister's," cried Khabár; "the man that looketh within it shall not live."

"Peace!" sternly exclaimed the boyárin: "'the egg teacheth not the fowl.'" Then, turning to the deacon, he added, "fulfill the order of our good lord."

"The selection was soon made—the choice had been previously arranged by Roussálka. The quarter towards the Kreml, containing the hall, the armoury, and a corner chamber adjoining it, was fixed upon for the leech's lodging. After this, custom required that the messenger of the sovereign should be entertained. The cups began to go round; but this time the sweetmeats tasted like physic to the boyárin. He could not drown his mortification. The tiny deacon, who assuredly was only fit to drink out of thimbles, fell down, like a drowned fly, at the tenth goblet.

Rest there, little creature, till a happy awakening!

The voevóda departed to his own apartments, (which we shall henceforward call the master's quarter,) and left orders with his son to put the deacon to bed, and conduct him home with honour when he should be sober again. Such was then the law of hospitality, even if the guest were worse than a Tartar in the eyes of his entertainer. But the hot-brain, Khabár—determined otherwise.

"Wait!" he said, looking at the dead-drunk

deacon: "Wait awhile, thou ill-omened raven! I will clip thy wings so that thou shalt never fly to us again with thine evil tidings!"

And Khabár borrowed from his sister's nurse some strong swaddling-bands and a sheet; wrapped up the deacon, and swaddled him like a baby. His gigantic beard was carefully combed, and spread out in all its proud magnificence. When this was done, the gentle, courteous, wizened phiz of the little man, seemed to be lighted up with a smile. No, that smile Khabár would not have lost for the most precious gifts—to have enjoyed it, he was willing to lie a whole month in the *Black Izba*, (prison.) He took his baby in his arms, and went out of the court-yard. Hardly had they thrown eyes on the swaddled up infant with the tremendous beard, when the passengers before, behind—merchants, workmen—all rushed towards him, and formed a merry tumultuous procession. Shouting, giggling ha ha's, filled the air—'twas a real festival of Momus! The mob grew and grew, and at last dammed up the street; those only who were tolerably near to the chief actor in the farce, could understand what they saw: but the further off any man was, the more extravagant were the reports that reached him. One cried—"A child hath been born with a beard a fathom long!" another—"A bearded star hath fallen on the earth!" a third—"They have found a monster, a living head with a beard!" It would require a volume to relate all the wonderful things they said about the beard. The old people saw in it the end of the world, and the coming Antichrist; the young were delighted to laugh at something that had never been seen before. They shoved each other, they fought, they paid money, only to have a look at the beard. Then there mingled in the crowd the constables; their threats, their sticks, even the name of the Great Prince—all was useless. The huge procession went on, further and further, and only stopped at the deacon Borodátii's izba. The poor little man had been able to become sober, but could not come quite to himself on account of the noise and rabblement which surrounded him, nor form a distinct idea of what was being done with him. For some time his servants refused to let in their master, and it was not till convinced by the sound of his voice, and by his beard, that they admitted him, and received him carefully in their arms.

The report of this prank soon reached even the Great Prince's palace. While the jest, imagined by the audacious Khabár, was going forward, what terror filled his father's house, as soon as the news was spread that a German was to live among its inmates! Still further was this terror increased, by stories which flowed in on all sides about the dreaded stranger. Some affirmed that he belonged to the Jewish heresy: others, that he was brought to Russia by a brother Hebrew. Some added, that he was a sorcerer, who could give life or death by herbs and dead men's bones; that he could predict men's destiny with the blood of infants or a human skull; that he drew people to him with a hook made of the claws of the Evil One. What other horrors were not said about him? And his face! that could not be human! Certainly, it must be a horrid one with a beak, with owl's ears! What a person to have in the house! . . . Evil days had fallen on Obrazéts and his family. He seemed himself as though he had lost his wife and son a second time. Khabár raged and

* The ancient Greek Church held in great abhorrence the Latins, or Roman Catholics.—T. B. S.

† "Worse than a Tartar," a proverbial expression of dislike, easily traceable to the hatred inspired by the Tartar yoke. Thus the Frenchmen used to call his creditors, "see Anglais."—T. B. S.

stormed like a mountain torrent. Anastasia, hearing the horrible stories—is sometimes trembling like an aspen-leaf, and then weeps like a fountain. She dares not even look forth out of the sliding window of her bower. Why did Vassili Feodorovitch build such a fine house? Why did he build it so near the Great Prince's palace? 'Tis clear, this was a temptation of the Evil One. He wanted, forsooth, to boast of a nonsuch! He had sinned in his pride . . . What would become of him, his son and daughter? Better for them had they never been born! . . . And all this affliction arose from the boyárin being about to receive a German in his house!

They, however, thought of every thing that could prevent the infidel spirit from coming in contact with the orthodox one. Again began the holy-water sprinkling; again the incense-burning to such a degree, that one could hardly distinguish objects through its dim grey veil. Again the praying with prostration to the earth, for protection against the incursions of the fiend. Then the copper cross was fixed on the lodging of the expected stranger, with as much noise and howling as if it were the last nail in a good man's coffin. This was not enough: the unclean mouth of a heretic, could it, should it touch the vessels out of which ate true believers—good Christians, who had been baptized! Was it a reasonable thing? They bought new pewter vessels, ladles, bottles, drinking-cups—all that was necessary for the German's table. These were never to be carried into the orthodox quarter: and at his departure were to be burned all together. They divided the court-yard with a lofty fence, and made separate doors into the heretic's division. To wait upon the leech Antony, they selected a lad under twenty; and for their choice of him, in particular, there was an important reason. He was without kith or kin—an orphan.

This circumstance would rather have induced our ancestors to take care of him. No, this was not the reason why they chose him as the victim—as if to be devoured by the "*Serpent of the Mountains*;"* he was "half-christened;" (he had never been known to possess any other name.) At the moment of his baptism a terrible storm had arisen; and the holy mystery had never been completed. This had been repeated to him from his infancy. What religion he professed he knew not himself, and therefore he never went to church. It was as if he had been purposely prepared to be the heretic's servant.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ARRIVAL AND RECEPTION.

"It is not to be supposed that the roads in those days, (i. e., in the fifteenth century,) resembled the present *Chaussee* from Moscow to Petersburg."—POLEVOI—*The Oath at the Tomb of our Lord*.

On the Smolensk road, about seven versts from Moscow, several sledges were ploughing their way through the snow-wreaths. These vehicles were of great—nay, extreme length, with hoods made of hoops covered with canvass, similar to those carriages which the Jews still employ in their journeys from Poland into Russia. The horses were tall, not of Russian blood,

and appeared still taller from the huge collars, decorated with crescents, stars, and balls of copper, with which they were equipped. These fornaments gave notice of their approach by the tinkling sound of the metal. On the front seats of the sledges sate the drivers—for the most part Jews. It seems, as I have already said, that at this epoch there was no gainful employment which the sons of Judah did not adopt. They wielded, with a master's hand, the whip or the caduceus; they laboured, with equal dexterity, with tongue or brain: the sword alone was refused them. To Russia, in particular, notwithstanding the hatred and detestation with which they were regarded—to Pskoff, Nõvgorod, and Moscow, thronged Hebrews, as cloth merchants, *izvoztchiks*, (drivers of hired carriages,) interpreters, and agents. If they succeeded, they returned home from Russia loaded with rich sables: if they failed—they left their heads here.

In the van of the procession, from between a ragged foxskin cap and a greasy sheepsin gown there projected, like a vane, a sharp-pointed beard, fluttering in the wind, and covered with the downy whiteness of frost. Eyes, grey as those of the owl, gleaming from below brows powdered with rime, seem to outrun the jaded horses, and peer inquisitively afar. Arriving at Poklónnáia Gora, the Hebrew jumped hastily from his seat. In front of him a prospect of some dozen versts was spread out, illuminated by a splendid winter day. He strained his eyes, then stretched them again, stopped his horses, went up to the hood of the sledge, and knocked upon it with his whip; saying, in a voice as triumphant and full of delight as if he were announcing the discovery of an unhabited island in a shoreless ocean:—"Kucke, kucke, geschwind, herr! (look, look, make haste, sir!) There is Moscow" . . .

"Moscow?" . . . asked some one from under the hood, in a voice of equal delight, but tremulous; and immediately was thrust out a head covered with a fur cap: there looked out a young man's face, handsome and ruddy with the frost. "Moscow?" he repeated, lowering his voice, "Where is it?" . . .

"There, on the hill in the forest," replied the Hebrew: but remarking that his fellow-traveller's face assumed a strong expression of disappointment, he added, in a perplexed tone—"Why, you are hard to please, master; you vished, perhaps, for Jerusalem . . . Why did you not live in de time of Solomon den? But, perhaps, you wanted Kroléftz, Lipetsk, or something more!"

"Ay, by thy description, honest Zakharia, something like them," replied the young traveller ironically; and then he began to gaze intently on the distance. He was still looking for Moscow, the capital of the Great Prince, with its glittering palaces, its splendid temples with gilded cupolas, gold-pointed spires piercing the heavens; and he saw before him, scattered along the snow-covered side of a hill, a disorderly crowd of huts, half enclosed in a broken wall, half stretching out beyond it. He saw all this embosomed in a black bristling forest, from which here and there peeped out the low stone churches of monasteries. The river, which added in summer-time so much beauty to the town, was now locked up in ice, and could hardly be distinguished winding along its snowy banks. It is true, Moscow was surrounded by numerous villages, outskirts, and suburbs; separated from it sometimes by fields, sometimes by woods, and

* A terrible dragon or serpent, in the Russian fairy tales, which keeps watch over the "Living Water."—T. B. S.

here and there connected by long lines of houses. It is true, that had all these outskirts, suburbs, and villages been united by the imagination of the spectator into one whole, the city might well have excited his astonishment by its enormous size, as the future metropolis of Russia. But the first impression was made; and to the eyes of our travellers, Moscow was confined to that limited space which, to the present day, though in the midst of the town, retains the name of the city. Perhaps at this moment Antony was thinking of the odorous atmosphere of Italy, its palaces and temples, beneath the vault of a glowing heaven, the tall pyramid-like poplars, and the vine-tendrils of his native land—perhaps he was thinking of Fioraventi's words: "*He that entereth that gate never shall return*"—He was thinking of his mother's tears—and he mournfully bent down his head.

From this reverie he was aroused by voices shouting around him—"Moscow! Moscow! Signor Antonio," and his sledge was encircled by five or six men of various ages dressed in winter habits. Schoolboys returning home for the holidays, greet not with greater joy the spire of their native village.

"But what a miserable hole of a town!" said one of them.

"An encampment of savages!" cried another.

"Look! and their houses are built like tents," chimed in a third: "the first poor beginning of architecture."

"We will set all that to rights. 'Tis not for nothing that they have invited us hither. We will build palaces, mansions, temples. We will gird the town with a noble wall. We will raise fortifications; we will fill them with cannon. Oh! in a dozen years they shall not know Moscow again"

"But what is our Fioraventi Aristotle about? for we see nought but piles of brick on the mountain and below it."

"He is making ready for work" exclaimed one of the travellers, sarcastically twirling his mustache.

"He hath been thinking about it ten years; in the eleventh he will make up his mind" . . .

"'Tis because he worketh for eternity, not for to-day," interrupted Antony with a generous anger. "Which of you helped him to straighten the Campanile of Cento? Ye stood gaping by when he was moving Del Tempio la Magione.* Grow up to his size first, and then measure yourselves with him. But now beware with one glance of genius he will crush you."

"I love Antonio for that," cried one of the crowd, a man of middle age, who had till now preserved a contemptuous silence. "I love Antonio! He is a true paladin, the defender of justice and honour Comrade, give me thy hand!" he added with feeling, stretching out his own to Ehrenstein. "Thou hast said a good word for one who is a countryman of mine, and a great artist."

Those who had commenced the boasting conversation were silent, abashed by their companion's words. Probably they dared not begin an altercation, out of respect for his age or endowments; and they bore Antony's reproach in silence, because they might some time or other need his assistance; besides this, his chivalrous soul, they knew, would submit to no hard language. He who had given him his hand in sign of friendship was the future builder of the Carved

Palace.* The other travellers were masons, stone-cutters, and founders in metal.

And so they began to approach Moscow.

The first disagreeable impression of disappointed expectation being past, Antony consoled himself. Was it for lifeless edifices that he had come to a distant land? Was it curiosity that had attracted him thither? No! It was love for humanity, for science, for glory—it was this that pointed out to him the road to Muscovy: a weak man implored the aid of a stronger man—the stronger flew at his call: "to whom much is given, of him much will be required," said Christ himself. The light enjoyed by him, it was his duty to share with others as long as he owed any thing to humanity. It might be, great toils awaited him; but without toil there can be no great achievement.

His imagination, aroused by these consolatory reflections, presented to him a panorama of Moscow, arrayed in far less gloomy colours. He brought thither the spring with all its enchanting life. He bade the river flow once more between its banks. He lighted up the outskirts with gardens, and breathed perfumes over them. He sent a breeze to play with airy fingers on the strings of the dark pine forest, and drew from it wild wondrous harmonies. He peopled the whole with piety, innocence, love, and patriarchal simplicity; and Moscow appeared before him renovated by the poetry of heart and imagination.

In this mood of mind the travellers arrived at the village of Dorogomilova. The ragged boys who were playing with snowballs in the streets, greeted them with various shouts and cries. They yelled out: "Jews! Dogs! They crucified Christ."—Others: "Tatare boyare, boyare Tatare!"†

"What cry these boys?" enquired Antony of his driver, who understood the Russian language.

"Vhat cry dey?" replied the Jew: "in de Sherman tongue dat is—'hail, dear shtrangers!'"

And immediately upon this the boys saluted the dear strangers with a volley of snowballs. Then began to stream out of the houses, clotted, tangled beards of various colours, sheepskin caps, *lapti*,‡ sheepskin coats all covered with patches, horned headgears, and faces, the expression of which was far from favourable to the travellers. It is true, now and then glanced out a hazel eye from under the dark brow of a pretty girl, able to lead a saint into temptation—a smile on cherry lips, parted to show a row of pearly teeth; there appeared, too, tall stalwart young men, such as Napoleon would have been enraptured to enrol in his legion: but even among these, hatred of foreigners showed itself in looks and insulting words. It was not to see the travellers, however, that they came thronging out of their houses: no, they were streaming towards Moscow, as if to see some spectacle for which they feared to be too late. "Make haste, accursed heretics!" they cried to the strangers; "at last the rulers have had the sense to roast ye make haste, and there will be room for you too!"

The Hebrew augured ill from these threats:

* Aleviz.—*Note of the Author.*

† Even in the present day, in the villages of the province of Tvor, the traveller is often greeted—a relic, probably, of the former sovereigns of the country, the Tartars.—*Note of the Author.*

‡ Shoes of plaited birch-bark, still worn by the peasants.

* The Campanile of Sta Maria, in Bologna.

—T. B. S.

knowing, however, that to exhibit fear would be to expose the whole party to imminent danger, he answered in a steady voice—"Evil may come to others, but good will be to us; we are carrying church-builders to the Great Prince."

"Tis rarely done of Iván Vassilievitch, our lord: he perileth his soul by consorting with Jews and heretics!" cried one of the crowd.

"He pulleth down the church of the Most Holy Mother of God, and in the place thereof he buildeth palaces and houses for his boyárens, and for his dog-whippers . . . and maketh gardens," added another. "Tis a curse on the country, and nothing else."

"Ay, and a holy place, where stood the house of the Lord, is now not even fenced in; and the dogs—God keep us!—can run on it."

"That is the cause of the fires in Moscow."

And the terrible apparitions in the heavens."

Such was the language of the Russian people at this epoch, discontented with innovations and contact with foreigners. But they spoke thus when they knew that their speech would not reach the Great Prince, who loved not to be crossed, or to have his doings found fault with. They murmured behind his back; but in Moscow itself the boyárens and people never dared to give utterance to their dissatisfaction. Antony, who did not understand the speech of the inhabitants of these suburbs, could only guess, by the malignity expressed in their faces, by the ferocious glances cast at the strangers, that here, at least, dwelt none of the mild children of the patriarchal age.

The road led through the forest which girded the city. Wooden crosses in considerable numbers, sometimes by the roadside, sometimes in the recesses of the wood, awakened in the travellers thoughts of Russian piety: thoughts which would have given place to a feeling of terror, had they known that these crosses marked the burial-place of unfortunate persons who had perished by knife or halter. Not only in remote times, but even down to the end of the eighteenth century, the forests surrounding Moscow concealed bands of robbers, and murders were not unfrequent.

The bridge over the river Moskvá, built on beams, quivered under the sledges of the travellers, as if it had been elastic. Advancing a little further, beyond the village of Tchortolino (now the Prechístenska), they entered the suburb of Zaneghlunye; but here nothing indicated the capital of Muscovy. Miserable, poor huts made of boards slightly nailed together, here and there hovels hastily erected on the ashes of a recent conflagration, churches and bell-towers in great numbers, but all of wood and very poor, with huge sheds round them, such as we see even now in the villages of the steppes. The people, too, generally dressed in naked sheepskin *shúbas*, uncovered with cloth,* the multitudes of the halt, the lame, beggars, and idiots, surrounding the churches, and in the cross-roads—all this was no very exhilarating prospect to our travellers.

They had hardly reached the Kóutchkoff rampart, which leads from the Straytenskii monastery, along the river Moskvá, beyond the Great Street (*Velikáia Oulitza*), when they beheld a

column of smoke ascending into the air, growing thicker and thicker as it was reinforced with fresh wreaths of vapour, till at last it seemed a gigantic pillar, decorated with the fantastical ornaments of some order which never existed, and appeared to support the sky. The artists, for some moments, admired this strange phenomenon, to which the ardent imagination of the south gave a kind of creative existence, and in fancy represented it on paper. Antony, however, regarded it with a kind of melancholy presentiment, though agreeing with his companions that a conflagration could not be the cause of this phenomenon.

At their arrival in the Great Street, they were met by a number of officers sent by the Great Prince, with an interpreter, to congratulate the travellers on their safe arrival, and to conduct them to the houses prepared for them; but, instead of taking them along the Great Street, the officers commanded the drivers to descend to the river—alleging the impossibility of passing through the street, which they said was choked up with the ruins of houses in consequence of the late fire.

Before they got down to the river, the travellers had observed that the column of smoke arose from a pile lighted on the stream itself. Was it some festival—a relic of the times of idolatry? Was it a dance round a fire? Perhaps it was some inconsolable widow, who was about to burn herself in the Indian fashion. . . . The mob is shouting, laughing, clapping its hands—is is clear some sport is preparing.

Close to the pile itself the sledges stopped; the crowd rendering it impossible to pass further. A strange spectacle awaited the newcomers!

The blazing pile was about fourteen feet in width. On the other side of the fire were heard shouts of triumph and delight. A throng of people were approaching it, dragging along some large object. What could it be—a bell? But as soon as its two-legged team stepped aside, the spectators beheld a cage, grated with thick iron wire, and within it two men. One was a youth, the other appeared aged. The despair in their eyes—their prayers—the blazing pile—the iron cage—the delight of the mob. . . . O, it was doubtless an execution that was about to take place! The cage was pushed along on rollers—right into the blazing pile! The flame, stifled for a moment by the heavy weight, belched forth volumes of smoke—the bottom of the cage began to writhe, and soon crackled in the heat. A groan was heard. The hearts of the travellers were frozen with horror; their hair bristled on their heads. Antony and his comrades implored the officers to remove them from this agonizing scene; they were answered, that, as an example to others, a punishment was being inflicted on villainous, godless traitors, Lithuanians, the Prince Iván Loukómskii and his interpreter Matiphas, who had attempted to poison the Great Prince, the Lord of All Russia, Iván Vassilievitch. Antony began, through the interpreter, to urge his request with warmth. No answer was returned.

"By Almighty God," cried the sufferers, bowing to the people; "by our God and yours, we swear—we are innocent! O Lord! thou seest that we are guiltless; and thou knowest who have accused us before the Great Prince. . . . Mamón, Roussálka—ye shall answer in the other world! . . . Unhappy strangers, why have

* *Shúba*, a kind of long fur-coat, with the hair inside: the *shúba* of the peasant is of sheepskin, and without any covering of cloth.—T. B. S.

ye come hither? Beware . . . In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and?" . . .

The smoke wrapped them in its volumes, and stifled the words on the lips of the wretched men.

"Ha, ha! they bellow!" cried the spectators.

The bridge over the river Moskvá, in sight of which this horrid scene took place, was creaking under the crowd. The balustrade yielded and swayed beneath the pressure. In vain did the old men and people of experience warn the foolhardy spectators; the only reply was the voice of Russian fatalism—"We cannot die twice, and once we must." And immediately after this the balustrade crashed in sunder, and carried with it dozens of people on the ice of the Moskvá. Many were fatally injured.

By this time the fire had begun to burst freely forth from under the cage, and many branched tongues of flame began to lick its sides. A fiery fountain spouted from the bottom. Two dark figures could be distinguished through the blaze. They embraced each other . . . fell . . . and in a short time nothing remained of them but ashes, which the wind bore into the bystanders' eyes. The iron cage grew red-hot—along its crimson bars ran here and there bright sparks, which snapped like fire-works.

CHAPTER X.

THE NEWSMONGER.

"Who art thou?"

—All sciences, all arts, this fertile brain adorn, sir; An universal genius I think that I was born, sir. I'm every where at home; *par tout*, sir, I have been; My tongue can plump a purse that's sometimes rather lean; Though times be often hard, I scramble as I can, Sometimes, perchance, a rogue, sometimes an honest man."

KHMAYLNITZKOI.

"HE is come; he is come!" resounded through the mansion of Obrazétz, and every living being in it, excepting Khabár, pale, panting, trembling, first uttered a sigh of terror, and then began to bustle about. They tried to move—their feet tottered; they tried to give orders, or to transmit them to one another—their lips produced only an inarticulate sound. Recovering themselves at length, they opened the gate: What! not yet he—the terrific stranger! It was the servants of the Great Prince, with *bread and salt* from Iván Vassílievitch. They carried on dishes pairs of fowls, geese, turkeys, pork, baked meats, a keg of foreign wine, and—it is impossible to give a list of all they brought, which seemed enough to feast at least a dozen. They also led along a horse, richly caparisoned, a present to the leech. At the head of this procession was the boyárin Mamón, who had begged permission to conduct it, as this duty would give him an opportunity of oppressing the heart of Obrazétz by his hateful presence. When the voevóda learned the arrival of his detested foe under his roof, he gave orders to his domestics not to go to meet the procession; his son, in particular, he had strongly forbidden to enter into any quarrel with his enemy; the rather, as Khabár had lately been excused, under his father's responsibility, from an imprisonment, incurred by his pranks. The hissing sound, indicative of the arrival of a sledge, was heard at the gate; the procession got in motion, and drew up in the court-yard in two lines, in order to receive the stranger. He leaped swiftly from the sledge,

thanked Zacharias for driving him, and offered him money, but the Jew refused it, only saying: "I pray thee remember, if thou hast need of anything, I am thy servant while I live."

Curiosity is so strong in human nature, that it can conquer even fear: notwithstanding the orders of the boyárin, all his servants rushed to obtain a glance at the terrible stranger; one at the gate, another through the crevices of the wooden fence, another over it. Khabár, with his arms haughtily a-kimbo, gazed with stern pride from the other gate. Now for the frightful face with mouse's ears, winking owlish eyes streaming with fiendish fire! now for the beak! They beheld a young man, tall, graceful, of noble deportment, overflowing with fresh vigorous life. In his blue eyes shone the light of goodness and benevolence through the moisture called up by the recent spectacle of the execution: the lips, surmounted by a slight, soft mustache, bore a good-humoured smile—one of those smiles that it is impossible to feign, and which can only find their source in a heart never troubled by impure passions. Health and frost had united to tinge the cheeks with a light rosy glow; he took off his cap, and his fair curls streamed forth over his broad shoulders. He addressed Mamón in a few words of such Russian as he knew, and in his voice there was something so charming, that even the evil spirit which wandered through the boyárin's heart, sank down to its abyss. This, then, was the horrible stranger, who had alarmed Obrazétz and his household! This, then, was he—after all! If this was the devil, the fiend must again have put on his original heavenly form. All the attendants, as they looked upon him, became firmly convinced that he had bewitched their eyes.

"Haste, Nástia!* look how handsome he is!" cried Andriúsha to the voevóda's daughter, in whose room he was, looking through the sliding window, which he had drawn back. "After this, believe stupid reports! My father says that he is my brother: oh, how I shall love him! Look, my dear!"

And the son of Aristotle, affirming and swearing that he was not deceiving his godmother, drew her, trembling and pale, to the window. Making the sign of the cross, with a fluttering heart she ventured to look out—she could not trust her eyes; again she looked out; confusion! a kind of delighted disappointment, a kind of sweet thrill running through her blood, never before experienced, fixed her for some moments to the spot: but when Anastasia recovered herself from these impressions, she felt ashamed and grieved that she had given way to them. She already felt a kind of repentance. The sorcerer has put on a mask, she thought, remembering her father's words: from this moment she became more frequently pensive.

At length the traveller succeeded in disembarrassing himself of the ceremony of reception; having generously rewarded the servants of the Tsar. His liberality forbade him to remain in any one's debt, even though his circumstances frequently opposed the dictates of his heart. He was left alone, and shut himself up in his chamber. Here he offered to the Creator the sacrifice of a reasonable creature; but even this was

* Nástia—the diminutive of Anastasia. Nástenka, the same. Russian crossing names generally end in *nia*, *sha*, *óusha*, or *óushka*—as Yússia, (for Iván:) Andriúsha, (Anastasia); Varfoloméushka, (Bartholomew.)—T. B. S.

turned to his disadvantage. They gossiped that he was imploring the Evil Spirit to release him from the holy influences of his new habitation.

He cast a glance round the rooms; one (the corner one) had windows towards the street and the wall of the Kreml. The other, formerly the armory, looked into the court-yard. His new abode seemed convenient and agreeable enough.

In a few moments some one knocked at the door, and announced himself as Bartholomew, interpreter to the great Lord and Tsesar, Iván Vassilievitch, to report the execution of a commission he had received from Antony. The doors were opened to him.

There entered a man of forty, or rather more; as in Borodátji's case it was the beard that had the pre-eminence, in this man it was the nose—a wonder of a nose! It was narrow at the bridge, but spread out towards the nostrils like a funnel, and was speckled all over with purple pimples. His little lips, affectedly pinched and protruded forwards, wore the expression of preparing to play on the flute; they appeared, under the hair of the chestnut beard and mustache—They appeared—the deuse take it! I have lost the comparison; it has slipped from my memory into an abyss—'tis gone, and I cannot catch it again. Ladies and gentlemen, you must make a new one for yourselves. The interpreter's little eyes expressed any thing but indifference to the feminine sex; and, but for the forty years, and something more, for the frequent pranks and visits to the cellar, which had decorated his forehead with divers significant hieroglyphics, and left bald patches on his pate—but for the pimples on his nose, and but for one of his legs, which loved subordination, and always waited till the other stepped out—but for all these little circumstances, I say, you would have thought Master Interpreter a very charming man. At least he considered himself as such. This confidence in his own personal endowments he used to support by tales of his achievements. At Lipetsk, he said, a certain maiden had drowned herself for love of him; and then there was the wife of the master of a printing-house—a beauty in the full sense of the word—with whom he was on the point of running away, like the bull with Europa. They were pursued and separated. The husbands of the whole town had united in a conspiracy, and threatened his life: *in consequence* of this, added Bartholomew, he had been compelled to pass the Rubicon, and to fly to Moscow. Here he learned the Russian language, and began to perform the duties of translator of *German papers*, and interpreter of German conferences.

Throwing open the skirts of a lynx-skin *shoubá*, Bartholomew exhibited his robe of reddish-yellow damask with gilded buttons. It is true his leg obstinately persisted in its trick of stumbling, but he soon conquered it, put himself into a majestic attitude, and informed Antony that Aristotle was not a home. At the invitation of his host he seated himself on a bench. As a juggler spins from his mouth hundreds of yards of coloured riband, so he began to spin out, with no interruption, his motley tales.

"Make use of me entirely," he said. "You have so enchanted me, in a moment, as I may say, that I—I—now, truly, had I been a woman, I should have been over head and ears in love with you. I am sure you would not have been cruel. For—see now, prithee—there is a kind of indescribable sympathy between us—is it not so?"

"O, exactly so!" replied Antony, smiling.

"In consequence of this feeling—use me as you will. If you want any thing of the Great Prince, one word—but one word. O, the Great Prince is most gracious to me! Here, for instance, be so good as to look at this *shoubá*—"

"I see."

"And what a *shoubá* it is! You are a foreigner; you assuredly do not know the price of these things. This is lynx—lynx, most honourable sir—very little inferior to sable; and sable the Roman Cæsar himself values as a most precious gift. It can only be compared to the soft glossy locks of a woman. And this silken stuff which covers it is soft, warm, elastic as woman's darling little knee. And these buttons! Is it not true they glitter like her bright eyes? All this is the gift of the Great Prince for my poor services. What a great man that is! If you knew what a master he is—how many new ranks he has created—ranks that never existed before. And he has ranged each in its place. I will tell you, (here he began to count on his fingers.) First, boyárin; second, voevóda; third, okólnitchii;* grand dvorétzkoí (remark, there are also deputies,) translator, and so forth; treasurer, seal-bearer, deacon, officer of the bed-chamber, of the wardrobe, falconer, equerry, huntsman, steward, officer of the tent, and a vast number of other ranks. You will certainly obtain one of the first."

"You do me honour! Not, however, I hope, that of officer of the bed-chamber."

"And what pay all these get from the treasury? We eat our bellyful, drink as much mead as we can, amuse ourselves just as we like; we are as happy as the day is long: a noble master! 'Tis a pity, though, that he should stick to his wife alone. Ah, what a garland of beauties I would have culled him! (He applied three fingers to his lips, with a smack, as if they tasted very sweet.) 'Tis true I came to Muscovy because I expected to find the East here . . . a real East! You understand me?" . . .

"And you were probably mistaken?" interrupted Antony, blushing like a young maiden. "I have heard that they shut up the women here, and that there are no conquests for a man, whatever be his powers of fascination."

"Oh do not think that!" exclaimed the translator with a conceited smile. "Hem! we have had opportunities . . . But one must be discreet in these affairs. The customs themselves are not so rigid as they say abroad. In the first place, at the feasts, the hostess, at the command of her husband, always regales the guests. She is obliged to kiss them. Then glances are intoxicating. Mead strong, husband absent in another city for business, war, or commerce—not only a Paris, but such as I, simple as I stand here, raise violent flames in ladies' hearts. A woman, you know, is always a woman. The secrecy of love is but an additional charm to her" . . .

"But the maidens of this country—they surely have no opportunity of meeting men?"

"Not openly; but they can always find means for secret interviews. They go to dance the round in the gardens; there be fences in the gardens; in the fences there be chinks, through which one may converse, and even snatch a kiss."

* Okólnitchii, the second rank of nobles in ancient Russia.—T. B. S.

† Khorovódai, a kind of game (from the Greek χορός,) consisting of dancing in a ring, and singing.—T. P. S.

A speechless converse from a chamber-window—a good-natured nurse—a porter devoted to your interest—a quiet house-dog—and the very wicket itself stills its creaking as if to aid love. Among us—that is, among you in Germany—the castles are stronger than the bowers in this country, and the guards are more faithful than the servants here; and yet even there *Cupid* plays his tricks. Trust me, most honourable sir, his empire is ever strongest where they keep the women under bolt and bar. The Russian songs prove this better than any thing else. I must tell you that I am collecting them, and have already written a whole volume of preface to them. I must confess, by the way, that in reading it over, I was astonished how I could write so finely; and I could have wept delight over my offspring. But I was speaking of the songs. You will chiefly find in them—now, bad neighbours who remark the lovers' secret interviews, and tell the father and mother; in another song, the wife wishes to get rid of her old husband; in another, she complains of infidelity; in a third, she leaves father and mother for some young scapegrace; every where you find woman's love ready for all sacrifices—every where the jollity and bravery of man. Do you require living examples?"

"O, you have given me examples enough!"

"Nay, allow me; I will but hint You see, we too are enlightened—we know a secret or so Yonder, not far off, lives the widow Selinova.* You see the next house, at the bend of the Konstantino-Yelonófskaia street. The little widow is mad with love for the son of your host."

"What, that tall, proud-looking youth, who was standing at the other gate of my entertainer's house?"

"Yes, that handsome young man—at least, I should call him handsome, if his height did not spoil him."

Antony smiled; but fearing to offend his companion, he became as attentive as before. The interpreter continued—"If discretion did not command me to lay my finger on my lips, I could give you much information about the pranks of this place. We know a thing or two We have admission to the boyárin's houses: we see their wives and daughters; but first I must beg you to remark, that before you can expect favours from either the one or the other, you must go over to their religion."

"In that case I shall never enjoy their goodwill," said Ehrenstein. "How did you"

"I confess I took the Greek faith here. This is an indispensable condition, if you wish the Russians to love you. If you do not give way in this you will be called a heretic, a Latiner, a heathen, though you be the best Christian in the world. They will fly from you, abhor you, just as in India they do the Pariahs. Where India is, I wish I may die if I can inform you; but the Russian traveller, Aphánasií Nikítin, hath told me all about it. I shall have the honour to present him to you. There, you must know, there are a class of people called Pariahs, who from generation to generation are despised, insulted, and persecuted by all, so that it is a pollution even to touch them. They avoid them as if they were lepers. Now, here foreigners are just the same. Nothing but the all-powerful protection

of the Great Prince preserves them from danger. On the other hand, foreigners who adopt our faith, are held in great honour and affection by the Russians."

Antony was about to interrupt him, by asking more detailed information respecting the condition of foreigners in Russia; but the printer would not stop, and went on printing his gossip at the rate of a steam-press—"But I have digressed, methinks, from my subject: let us return to the pretty women. This, I confess, is my weak point, my heel of Achilles. I was talking of the widow Selinova: her friend, her lover—call it as you will—is not over faithful to her. The rogue has lately made acquaintance with—whom do you think? . . . with the Greek girl Haidée; and Haidée—who is she, think ye? Neither more nor less than the mistress of Andreas Palæologos, the Greek Emperor and despot of the Morea—the Great Prince's brother-in-law. You see into whose nest the young Russian has crept! . . . Here, you may think a man must often feel whether his head is on his shoulders. I must tell you, by the way, that the Russians ever like to wade in the deepest waters. We Germans are still calculating and considering how to leap over a ditch, when the Russian is either on the other side, or has broken his neck. Haidée, as I was saying, is a Greek; but I did not tell you how handsome she is. Where the deuse are such beauties born? (Bartholoméw's eyes glistened and danced even more than usual.) You would think—God forgive me!—that the devil had cast her in some diabolical mould or other, and infused in her black eyes some of his own infernal flames. She torments your very soul, and follows you in your very dreams. Beautiful! a wonder of beauty! But I know a Muscovite girl prettier even than Haidée; worth ten of the Greek. And where do you think she dwells? Here, in this very house—in the bower over your head. She is the daughter of your host—why, most illustrious sir, she has stars instead of eyes!—cheeks like the glowing dawn, and lips lips!"—(here the speaker stopped short, snapped his fingers, seized his funnel of a nose; but could find no fit comparison for the maiden's lips, waved his hand, and went on with his description.) "Her dark-brown silken tresses are luxuriant enough, I swear, to chain you; and her little feet—they are a mere mouthful. Hark! do you hear them? tuk, tuk, they go, above you there there she is, touching the floor with her little feet Hark! how enchanting!"

With a deep sigh Bartholoméw sent up a kiss towards the ceiling from his projecting lips.

"But how is she named?" enquired Antony, with a smile.

"Anastasia—if you want any thing tendéser, Nástenka."

"What, and have you made a conquest here, too?"

"O, 'twould be a sacrifice to think of such a thing! She is as far above me as the sun. No tongue can wag to say any thing evil of her. She is as proud and haughty as a queen. The heart of Iván the Young, destined her a share of his throne: but fate willed otherwise."

The door opened, and the appearance of a new face interrupted the talk of the Cytherean tale-teller, whose gossip was not without interest to Ehrenstein. "Fioraventi Aristotle himself!" said the interpreter, hastily rising from his seat.

* Russian surnames are declined as substantives; hence the same family name, when borne by a man, has a masculine; and by a woman, a feminine termination. Thus, Selinova, the wife of Selinoff.—T. B. S.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ARTIST.

"They were poets, and their fictions were so sublime, that they fell down trembling before their own creations."
—N. NADEJIN.

"ANTONIO, dear Antonio! adopted son of my brother, what gods have brought thee hither?" cried the artist, embracing the traveller.

This was a tall man of middle age, whose black flowing locks were already tinged with hoar: on the lofty forehead, that throne of intellect, might be seen a deep hollow—the trace left by the finger of God when it rested, in the middle of his creative thought, on the brow of his anointed. Goodness shone forth in every feature—"Hadst thou a good journey, art thou well, contented with thy abode? dost thou need anything?" These questions, one crowding on the other, were the outpouring of an ardent and loving soul; and they rushed forth so rapidly, that Antony could not find time to answer them—"How many years it is since I saw thee! thou wert not much taller than my . . . Andrea," he added, turning to his son, who hitherto had been standing in silence at the door, remarking with delight, and an enthusiasm above his years, the pleasing scene of his father's interview with the stranger; his blue, intellectual eyes sparkled with the indescribable sympathy which attracted him towards Ehrenstein—"Andrea," continued the artist, "why standest thou as if thou wert nailed there? Why dost thou not embrace our Antonio? He, too, is my son; thou wilt be his younger brother."

And the boy threw himself, with no childish feelings, into the arms of him who had been named his brother: Antony received him in his embrace, and kissed his forehead—"Thou wilt love me, dear Andrea, wilt thou not?"

"I love thee already, Antonio."

In the mean time Aristotle gave a hint to Bartholomew (who was of inferior rank to himself) to leave them to themselves; the presence of a stranger seemed like a sacrilege and obstacle to their union. This hint was obeyed without hesitation, and with such rapidity and address, that Ehrenstein did not remark how he had slipped out. On this occasion the interpreter's short leg, which usually beat crotchets, executed semi-quavers, as though afraid of delaying its master.

"Here is a letter from my second father," said Antony, delivering it to the architect; "in the rapture of your affectionate caresses, I had almost forgotten to give it to you."

The letter was as follows—"Herewith is the son of my heart. Replace me for Antonio, my dear brother. I should have simply said—I send him to thee without preface; but so strange is his position in the world, his existence is so extraordinary, that I ought, in placing him under thy wing, to explain what I desire thee to do on this occasion. The child of fate—an ardent dreamer, too, like thyself—in a remote and uncivilized country, the very name of which hath but lately reached us; by these rights he, more than others, may claim thine aid and powerful protection. Thou lovest me; thou hast a strong sympathy with all that is noble, and assuredly thou wilt love my Antonio. I will not praise his intellect: I formed it myself. I will not praise to thee the elevation of his mind: thou thyself wilt perceive it. His heart is pure: guard, O my brother! that shrine, in which the angels may mirror themselves. I fear only one thing—his

soul is so inflamed with dreams of sublimity and virtue, that he forgetteth to take care of his own interest, and the advantages of life. Is it for me to say to thee, try to cool his vehement ardour—to thee, who art thyself so ardent with all the enthusiastic projects of youth? Remember, my dear brother, that my revenge hath robbed him of illustrious birth, of rank, of wealth. God only knoweth what I have taken from him, and what I have given him in exchange; and make up for him the loss by thy love, which is very, very dear to Antonio—dearer than thou canst imagine.

"Here is the key to this enigma:—

"When I took away Antonio, then an infant of a year old, my triumph was the triumph of the tiger which hath seized his victim from among the band of hunters who are chasing him. I swore I would make my ward a leech, and then proclaim him as the Baron Ehrenstein. Till I had fulfilled my vow, every thing seemed to conspire to aid its execution; my heart overflowing with revenge, the love of the mother, the coldness of the father. But when my Antonio became, in theory and practice, a physician, my heart, vanquished by the noble qualities of his mind, by my love for him, rejected the thought of a public revenge, such as I had determined to brand the proud baron withal. 'Who gave thee the right,' cried a secret voice, 'to punish the innocent for the guilty? is it for thee to do this, O man? With what price, with what labour, didst thou buy this being? The father might, perhaps, belong to thee by the right of vengeance; but what hath the son ever done to thee? Dost thou mean to create a destiny of thine own?' . . . Yielding to this secret voice, I confined my vengeance to writing to the baron. 'Your son is a leech. Would you have him with you?' I sent my letter by a trusty messenger, and—I confess to thee—I trembled lest the baron should come to reason, lest conscience and nature should speak stronger than pride; and . . . lest he should take my Antonio from me, lest he should destroy all the happiness of the boy's life. O, then he would have repaid me vengeance for vengeance! But I was soon restored to tranquility. I found a being, created in the likeness and by the will of God, and bearing the name of Christian, who . . . wouldst thou believe it? . . . my tongue cannot force itself to utter . . . I found a father who renounced his child! And he renounced him, why? Because this son—though he might cease to be a leech, yet *had been* one. We beheld the baron in every thing . . . I think I see him now . . . I see that miserable lordling, kneeling before me, weeping and imploring me not to take away his son, a year-old morsel of baronial flesh. Heartless wretch! . . . In his place I would have fulfilled the oath I had made to the Italian physician; but I would have given up my son dead, or to the dead! Now, when this son's mind is enlightened by religion and science, when he is made, in fact, better than he could have become in his father's house, amidst the servility of menials and the pride of a father—now I offer him this treasure, a treasure of which a prince of the empire might well be proud—and the baron orders me to be informed, through a trusty servant, that he has no son. This, he adds, is notorious to the emperor, the court, the clergy, and—if it become necessary to countervail my calumny—he relies on their protection. As a cruel proof that he deprives Antonio of all rights on his heart, his name, his family rank, he has

adopted Poppel, the son of his deceased sister; he was brought up in his house, along with his second son Ferdinand. The Emperor, pitying him for having no children, has seconded his wishes and confirmed his choice. As a sign of his favour, he hath raised the adopted son to the rank of knight. Thus the baron hath bound himself, even for the future. It is impossible for him to retract, after the emperor hath given his word. 'If ever I attempt,' he commandeth them to tell me, 'to make known that he has a son a physician, he will take measures to shut up that son in some place, where the prisoner assuredly will never more be heard of.'

"The time has been, when, strong in body and mind, I would have resisted the proud baron and unfeeling father; but now I am on the brink of the grave—revenge hath yielded to attachment for my pupil. Assured also that Antonio, if informed of his birth, would not desire to be unwillingly recognised as a son and heir, I even rejoice that I have, by this trial of the father, cleared my own conscience, fulfilled the wishes of the mother, and obtained, as it were, my Antonio a second time. We all return to the circle of our former hopes, duties, and intentions.

"We were still discussing our future plans, when I received from thee a letter begging me to find thee a physician for the court of Muscovy. When informed of the contents of this letter, Antonio offered himself, with enthusiasm, for the proposed employment. Having other views for him, however, I at first gave him a decided refusal: but I received an answer from the baron, and after that an anonymous letter, informing me, that unless my pupil's name were changed, he might expect imprisonment. To induce Antonio to consent to a change of name, I could never hope, from the innate pride and firmness of his character; and I thought it, too, unworthy both of himself and me, to so much as propose such a thing. The baron's death might still undo the knot of destiny; in the mean time the thought that a monastery, a prison, a dungeon might be my ward's lot, terrified me. Thou knowest how easily this may be done in Italy in our times, when lives, even more important, are bought for a piece of gold. Besides, I had received from credible persons information of the designs menacing Antonio's liberty. This danger changed all my plans; I gave him my blessing, and he set out on his distant journey. Age, feebleness, the weight of my sins, have made me so weak, I love him so much, that I am ready to consent even to part with him forever, if by so doing I can secure him so good a position as thou promisest in Muscovy. At the first letter I receive from thee, and with Antonio's consent, I intend to send thither all I possess, and end my days in a monastery. Already half my life hath been one heavy, dreadful sin—revenge. It is time to think of eternity.

"How happy is Antonio in his dreams! A child of destiny, he is unconscious of how much is done for him—of how we labour for him. He knoweth nothing of his father's rank and wealth, or that that monster hath renounced him. Happy ignorance! Long may he remain in it! He dwells in paradise—he hath not eaten the forbidden fruit. It is our duty to keep him in this delightful enchantment.

"This, then, my beloved brother, is the cause wherefore I send thee the son of my heart; confiding to thee, with him, his hopes, his perils, and his fate. Remember I am his debtor in every thing, body and soul, here and hereafter."

While Aristotle was reading his brother's letter, the young physician was conversing at the table with Andriúsha, encircling with one arm the boy's slender, graceful form. Notwithstanding the difference of age, there established itself between them from that moment, a strong and solid friendship.

"Come, both of ye, my children, come to my heart!" said the architect, with tears in his eyes, when he had read through the letter; pressing both of them to his bosom.

Then again began questions and tales about the life of young Ehrenstein, his education, his visit to the Eternal City, the hopes that had attracted him to Russia. The artist at one moment paid these recitals the tribute of his tears; at another, burning with love to the beautiful, he would press with rapture the hand of the physician. Then again he shook his head, as though not quite assured of the fulfilment of the young man's lofty hopes; but these fears, these doubts, were momentary. The flame that glowed in Ehrenstein's bosom soon communicated to the breast of Aristotle, and the artist, forgetting bitter experience, joined his own visions to the visions of the stranger, built with him temples to science, to the love of humanity, to every thing beautiful, and promised Antony to aid him in all. With sincere delight did Andriúsha listen to their conversation, and gazed with a kind of pride, now at his father, now at the dear German, as he called Ehrenstein. On the other hand, Ehrenstein, charmed with his intellectual appearance, reading in the boy's eyes a ready reply to the questioning of his own heart, enjoyed the thought, that in him he should really find a brother. And Aristotle rejoiced, like a happy father, reading the same hope in the language of their eyes, which so clearly expressed their attraction towards each other, and in the caresses which they shared.

"Thou hadst but a bad reception," said Aristotle; "the execution of the Lithuanians." . . .

"Oh! I had long forgotten in your company every thing painful. But thou remindest me of the execution; and those unhappy wretches seem to flit before my eyes. What cruelty!"

"Gently, young man! The lightning of heaven sometimes consumeth, sometimes reduceth villages to ashes: yet doth it clear the air for a good harvest. Shalt thou, therefore, murmur against Heaven! Partial evil is nothing, when it saveth the whole. I cannot tell thee accurately; but I think that the execution of the Lithuanians was necessary, not alone for the safety of Iván, doth it not weaken the intrigues of Lithuania. Russia's dangerous rival? The Great Prince's suspicions are not without foundation. In the first place, weakness is ever suspicious; and Iván hath not yet had time to strengthen himself so far as not to fear for the stability of the edifice he hath founded. In the second place, the neighbours of Russia have begun to grow jealous, and seriously so, of her growing power: nor are there any means, secret or open, permitted or forbidden, of which they will not make use in order to crush her in the person of her sovereign. Here, then, is clearly the motive for severe measures, and the assurance of their justice: here punishment taketh place openly, without any concealment. Sometimes Iván doth indeed play a dark game . . . but how can we find a difficulty in excusing these crooked and secret measures, when we behold in their consequences the good of his empire!"

'What cruelty!' sayst thou, looking at the execution of the Lithuanians; but canst thou more easily find excuse for what hath been, and is still, done in our own Italy? The fire and the iron cage—are these worse than the horrors and the cruelties, disgraceful to humanity, which thou must have too often beheld in the petty principalities of Ausonia? Look at what is going on in Spain! There they have established what they call the Inquisition; which, on the information of a hireling spy, draggeth victims to the stake, and burneth them to death, by quick or slow fire! I am no defender of cruelty in any case; but if in enlightened countries they give no breathing-time to the bloody axe, surely it is excusable in Muscovy to" . . .

"I am ready to yield to thy proof," said the leech; "particularly after what I have, alas! beheld at Milan and at Rome. Permit me, however, to remark, thou defendest the customs of this country as warmly as if Muscovy were thy native land" . . .

A slight blush flitted across the face of Fioraventi Aristotle. He seemed to be preparing to make some confession; but not liking that his son should hear it, he sent him to inquire about the health of the Signorina Anastasia—"She is good and kind," said Alberto; "she loveth thee so well."

The boy immediately comprehended that his presence interfered with the freedom of the conversation, and hastened to tear himself from the embrace of his new brother, nodding affectionately as he did so. "Dost thou know, Antonio," he cried, stopping at the door: "they told the signorina, to whom I am now going, that thou hadst horns, and a frightful face."

"Really!" said Antony, blushing; "endeavour to undeceive her."

"I have already managed to do that. I will tell thee some day all about it."

With these words the arch boy darted from the chamber.

"Thou art, perhaps, astonished," said Aristotle, "that my Andrea is no stranger in the house here. I will add, that the signorina's bed-chamber, even the master's oratory, are never closed to him. To a foreigner! a Latiner! you will say, having already had an opportunity of observing the dislike felt by all Russians towards a foreigner. No! my son, though the son of an Italian—of a zealous Catholic—is no foreigner in Muscovy. He is a real Russian, and hath taken the faith of Russia; and this by my own desire, without compulsion of any power whatever."

"I thought that the printer Bartholomew" . . .

The young man did not finish his phrase: Aristotle interrupted him—"That is, thou thoughtest that he alone was capable of this. Without being ashamed, I say, I have done the same with my son. Thou hast seen my Andrea. Thou hast understood this child—this treasure—this pledge of a wife—of such a wife! If thou but knewest . . . Fioraventi is his father. Fioraventi is as proud of him as of one of his best works. Ay, *one* of the best! . . . for there is another which—I am ashamed to confess to thee—is dearer to me than all. I am vain, selfish, ready for my own name, for my own glory, to sacrifice God knoweth what! In one word, thou wilt know me better—I am a madman . . . But in my senseless love for myself I have not forgotten my son—I have considered his welfare. I will not conceal it

from thee, my friend; Muscovy must be my grave. This is the law of destiny. I am necessary to the Tsar: engineer, brickmaker, founder, mason, architect—I am all for him; and there is no force that can drag me from this country, no magic which can enable me to return to my own, until men arise capable of replacing me: and they . . . God knoweth when they will appear . . . The Great Prince overwhelmed me with favour; payeth me with treasure, with caresses, with kindnesses. His most distinguished generals, the highest signori, dare not approach him unannounced; but this I can do at any time. The glance at which all tremble, hath never once been turned on me in wrath. But this same Great Prince, this friend and patron, hath entwined me in such a net of iron, that I can never burst through it. My every step, my every action, is known to him. As I know my fate, I determine to dedicate to him my life, my powers. Perhaps I myself oppose not this inevitable destiny: perhaps I myself have sought it. Let Muscovy, then, be my tomb; at least I will erect over it a monument that enlightened nations shall some day, perhaps, come to admire. Into this creation I have thrown all my soul: my knowledge, my country, my life, my immortality. But my son!—that beloved pledge bequeathed to me by my wife! my son—whom I myself so fondly love . . . I have thought for him too. The Great Prince, to reward my services, hath sworn not to desert my child when I shall be no more. He caresseth him even now, as he caresseth not his own children. I wish Andrea Aristotle to be a general" . . .

"Why not an architect like thyself?"

"Why? why . . . Here, even here, thou must behold a selfish madness . . . I wish there to be but one Fioraventi an artist in the world. Yes, yes! thou wilt know me better, young man: yes, yes! 'tis not youth alone that burneth with fiery dreams. Beneath these white ashes, too (he pointed to his white hair), there is hid an unextinguishable volcano . . . But let me return to my son. The penetrating eyes of Ivan read my soul; and Ivan calleth my Andrea his general—converses with him about military affairs, lights up the desire for military glory in his young heart, and strongly enjoineeth his own sons, for the sake of their father's soul, never to forget their father's voevoda. 'Tis well, methought. I shall die—and he will be rich by the favour of the Russian Tsars. But with what eyes, with what feelings will the heretic be regarded at the court of some future Great Prince, by the boyarins, priests, and people! At present I am protected from their hatred and contempt by the name of church-builder; for the present, I, and other persons of different faith, am shielded by the formidable will of Ivan, before which every thing gives way—man and destiny. But rulers with this union of mighty intellect and will, are born but once in a century: who can answer for the future? . . . Besides, I wish the future rulers to love my Andrea of their own free-will . . . I wish every Russian—every rank—to surround him with respect as a native, as a countryman. Then he will be able to aim high . . . I did not long hesitate. Andrea took the Russian faith. His godfather was Ivan the Young. He will be a father to my son when I am no more."

"Pardon me for my thoughtless reproach. I would have done the same for a beloved being,

so dear to my heart. But . . . now for another question. Do not attribute it to idle curiosity in a young man, whose whole title to thy indulgence consisteth in being thy brother's pupil. Take this question only as a sign of my love for the beautiful. Tell me in what great monument of architecture, here in Muscovy, thou intendest to hand down thy name to future ages?"

The artist's face was again flushed with a glow of modesty. He pressed with enthusiasm the physician's hand; and with quivering lips, which proved the agitation of his soul, he answered: "Ay! thou wilt understand me, young man. Thy journey to a foreign land, almost on the borders of humanity, undertaken without views of interest, is already a proof of a noble soul. My aim, too, is the realization of an idea elevated and sublime . . . (at least I think so . . . Of this in any case I am assured) to thee I can disclose my heart, my projects. I will relate to thee my toils and my hopes; I will tell thee how I dread to die without doing something worthy of immortality, and by what means I wish to purchase a name on earth. Favour me with the indulgence which my weaknesses implore from thy generosity.

"Thou knowest," continued Aristotle, "that I have made myself some reputation in Italy."

"The monuments of art which thou hast left in that country will never let it die, even though thou wert to produce nothing more."

"No, my friend; these efforts, rather bold than inspired, may have given me a humble niche in the chronicles of art. Experiments are not exploits: for triumphs it is that I am now preparing myself. While living in Italy, there dimly arose in my soul an ideal which was destined to be realized, under possible earthly proportions, afterwards here in Moscow. Even then the idea gave me no rest: following the brilliant meteor, and without power to execute my project, I yielded to the burden of an intolerable anguish; and was this surprising?—I—a weak man, a creature of nothing—desired to build a worthy temple to God—the mighty God—the Creator of the universe! All that I undertook to express in lines, colours, forms, corporeal methods, seemed to me immeasurably small beside this ideal—the offspring of my diviner part. Anguish, torture insupportable! I called to my aid dead and living nations: interrogated every age, I evoked the past and the present—hundreds of generations: that each might contribute its mite towards the building of a temple to God. Then unfolded themselves at my call the Parthenon, the Colosseum, the Alhambra, St. Sophia, troops of myths in stone descended from their pedestals: the pyramids of Egypt tottered to their foundations, and stood around me, like secular oaks around an emmet, hardly visible to the eye. 'What temple wouldst thou build to God, when we are but the tombs of men; yet even on these tombs toiled centuries and millions of hands?' seemed to ask these giants of the ancient world; and my imagination died away within me at the question. And then, when at my call arose cities and nations; when each of them offered me one letter of my divine poem—I could not even compose these letters of various lands into one harmonious word: is it strange? Each letter was an inspiration; they all resounded in my soul like a wondrous myriad-horns of angels, accompanied by a tempest from all the ends of the world. My head grew giddy; my heart fainted within me. I fell sick

. . . . They were even about to shut me up with madmen: perhaps it would have been just. Long I remained in a feeble condition. Restored at length by the physician's aid, and my love for my son, I returned to my senses; and the first voice of reason commanded me to fly from Italy, where methought the very air inflamed the imagination to madness. The Turkish Sultan invited me, through the Doge Marcelli, to Constantinople. 'What noble or sublime works,' said I to myself, 'can I execute for a people the enemy of Christ; a people to whom is promised, in a future world, nothing but a refined sensuality? Is it fountains and baths? Is it seraglios? Seraglios! baths! when the foundations of a temple to the living God were already laid in my heart!' I spurned the Sultan's gold. Then followed another invitation. This was from the sovereign of this country, and was accompanied by a proposition to build a temple to the most holy Mother of God. With pleasure what do I say? with rapture I accepted this new proposal; and here I am. Here, my friend, I think to realize the ideal which for so many years hath been rising up dimly in my soul. At last I have united it with possibility—with the powers of one generation—with the will and resources of one sovereign. I am now putting it on paper. When I have finished it, thou shalt see it, and tell me whether it be worthy of its destination. Then I shall submit it to the judgment of Ivan Sophia, and the Primate. But what toils, what struggles hath it not cost me—what will it not yet cost me, ere I can bring my idea to completion? What have I not even now to fear from the decision of the secular and ecclesiastical powers, well-disposed it may be towards my work, but little acquainted with what is beautiful in art! Ay, if thou knewest how dearly is bought each step that leads me to my aim; through what petty cares and trivial materialities I have to clear my path towards that object! I say it not boastingly; but a man must possess my iron will, my burning passion for art, not to be repulsed by such obstacles. I will but give thee some examples of these obstacles. Invited hither for the construction of the church of Our Lady, I found the art of building in its most essential part—that of the mere materials in the rudest infancy. Before I could build, I was obliged to teach them to destroy. The old Church of the Assumption, which had partially yielded to the Russian builders, in other parts held together firmly, in spite of the efforts of a thousand hands, labouring to throw it down. When I taught them the mechanism of the battering-ram, they considered me a magician. They knew not how to make bricks. How much time did I not employ in teaching them this art! With my own hands I tempered the clay, I made the moulds; I showed them the method of burning. They knew not how to make mortar, and this, too, I myself showed them."

"Bricks, mortar? When God himself was reflected in thy soul! Heavy is the struggle between the Ideal and the Material! I should have sunk beneath it."

"Heavy it was, 'tis true; but I sank not. Oh! I had strength enough for other heavy trials too. There arose a war with Néggorod. Ivan selected me from among his architects for his engineer. He required me to build bridges for the passage of his army over rivers; I built him bridges. He wanted me to cast cannon-balls; I

cast them. He expressed a wish that I should direct the artillery; I performed his wish. He desired to coin money; I coined him money. In a word, I transformed myself into whatever Ivan wished me to be. Think not that I did all this out of love or devotion to the Tsar. I love him—I am devoted to him, as a man grateful for his favour; but it was another feeling, it was another motive that directed my actions. I made myself the slave of his will—his day-labourer—in order to win his favour and confidence; for his favour and confidence were necessary for the fulfilment of my idea. The temple I wish to erect is of gigantic dimensions. I want for it about half the height of the Kremlin, hundreds of thousands of hands, piles of gold—the price of terrible, almost blood-stained labours. I am buying from by master almost every yard of ground—each hundred hands, each handful of silver. And till now—shall I confess it to thee, my friend?—I have had nothing but toil, nothing but struggle; and not an approaching glimpse of success. I am still very far from my object. All I have made my own is the hope of one day attaining it. Who can tell? Perhaps bitter reality, necessity, ignorance, will kill my achievement in the embryo. Perhaps death will reach me ere I can complete it” . . .

Here the artist sighed heavily, and tears filled his eyes. Antony pressed his hand with sympathy and equal love for what was noble, though with different views; and hastened to relieve his friend's heart by those tender consolations of which the artist stood so much in need.

CHAPTER XII.

RUSSIAN GALLANTS.

On the third day Aristotle came to the young physician in order to carry him to be presented to the Great Prince.

“The Tsar is enraptured at thy arrival, and is burning with impatience to see thee,” said the artist; “and in order the better to please our sovereign, who loveth to surround himself with the splendour of the court he hath created, do thou—his court physician—appear before him in thy best attire. I have commanded them to saddle thy steed; for I must tell thee, that here it is accounted shameful for distinguished persons to go on foot. Our horses will enable us to snatch an hour to glance, as we go, at the city, which is passing away. I say so, because the future Moscow is about to rise from the ashes of the present.”

In a few minutes Ehrenstein had completed his full-dress toilette, and was already mounted on a fiery steed, accompanied by Aristotle and an officer, also on horseback. How handsome he was in his German costume! How well-contrasted was the black velvet of his fur-edged doublet with the fairness of his face, and the bright streaming curls with the bonnet of violet velvet, overshadowed by a plume of waving feathers! The modesty of his profession and of his character did not permit him to lavish on his dress the gold with which his instructor had generously supplied him; and therefore it glittered, sparingly but tastefully, only in the buckle of his cap, the clasp of his mantle, and the girdle which supported the poniard at his side. To try the paces of his steed, he made two or three turns round the court-yard; how gracefully he sat his horse—how masterly he guided him!

Nor was this wonderful. In his education neither the art of horsemanship nor that of wielding the sword had been neglected: because, said his instructor, all this is indispensable to a physician. They call thee to a patient—they send thee the first horse that cometh to hand; thou must ride to the help of thy fellow-creature through storm and tempest, and along bad roads. Thy life is endangered; they have insulted thy honour, thy dignity as a man. Learn how to defend the one and the other. Learn how to wipe out thy humiliation in the insulter's blood. From all this it may be seen that any princess might have chosen our young leech as one of her pages or paladins.

All was empty in the boyárin's court-yard when they rode out of it. This time no one dared to look at the heretic, even through the chinks of the wooden fence, because he had been busy all night long with the evil ones. Thus they interpreted his having worked before cock-crow, putting in order his travelling medicine-chest. He would not allow himself to go to rest, till he had prepared himself to perform his duty at the first call of a sufferer. And thus their ignorance had explained his midnight labour. The loneliness of his dwelling, the master of which had obstinately refused to see him, in spite of his courteous messages, struck him with painful surprise. “Thou art come to a land whose people is yet in a state of ignorance,” said Aristotle to him consolingly: “wonder not if it shun every thing that is new to it. Wait. All will be changed by patience, time, indulgence, the toys and rod of the schoolmaster-Tsar, if it be needful, an' the child be too froward. Besides, when thou comest to know these savages better, thou wilt find in them many noble qualities—thou wilt love them, and thou too wilt acquire their love. Thou wilt see that much of what is excellent hath remained among them from the mixture of their national manners with the Teutonic customs: though the Tartar yoke hath destroyed many of their good qualities.”

“I will still dream of their love,” said Ehrenstein, “till I am quite disenchanted.”

At this moment Aristotle threw a quick penetrating glance at Anastasia's chamber. “What!” he interrupted, smiling, “it was not for nothing that the reputation of being a sorcerer preceded thee hither?”

“I do not understand thee.”

“Thus it is. My old eyes have just received a proof of thy magic. Thou sawest not, but I saw right well, one of our Muscovite beauties, and, indeed, the fairest among them, venturing to gaze on thee from the window of her bower, with greedy curiosity, though they had painted thee to her as a monster with horns and hoofs.”

“Where is she, where?” cried Antony, blushing.

“Where is she? . . . rather ask, where is the lightning when it hath just flashed. I only caught a sparkling glance of the black Italian eyes, and . . . I fear . . . we shall have a storm. Hath she so soon forgot her father's stern commandment? . . . Mischief is near at hand. Solitude, a handsome youth . . . in such close neighbourhood . . . a maiden's heart . . . O, Signora Anastasia! I fear for thee. No, I should fear for thee, I ought to have said, were I not confident in my young friend.”

Antony pressed his hand, as if to thank him for his good opinion of him; and when they had

ridden out of the gate, the novelty of the objects which surrounded him, distracted his thoughts from the Signorina Anastasia. It must not, however, be concealed, that she had excited in him a mysterious interest, like that raised by the heroine of some romance of chivalry, hidden in an enchanted castle.

Passing out of the Flóroffskii gate, and crossing one of the three wooden bridges over the ditch, which runs parallel with the stone wall extending from the pool of Neglinnaia to the river Moskvá, they came out upon the Red Square. The range of sheds called the Cannon-Arsenal; rows of wooden booths or shops, capable of being taken down and set up again in a few hours, like a camp; the stone house of the mayor of Moscow, Khovrin; a multitude of wooden churches worthy of the appellation of chapels—such was the Red Square! Further on, all is the same as what the traveller has already seen in the suburbs; but all these poor temples were blazing with tapers, lighted by religious zeal. At the windows of the houses there was not a human face to be seen; perhaps, here and there, the thin curtain was stealthily stirred, and from behind it there might have glanced an arm of satin, or flashed a magic eye. In the streets our cavaliers were greeted at one time with slavish servility, at another with coarse insolence. The passenger either bowed almost to the ground, or, as the proverb hath it, “whistled after you so shrilly, that the blood seemed to freeze in your veins.” Amongst these the gallant of the city, fair and ruddy, bustled by, with cap on one side, waist tightly pinched in by his girdle, ready “to take you on fang or fist,” seeming able to lay down his life for his brother, his comrade, his sweetheart or his country, his Tsar or his religion. These shades of Russian character, or the effects of foreign influence, Aristotle endeavoured to explain to his companion. They were frequently met by strangers—Tartars, Jews, Italians—the cement with which Ivan was hastily fixing his edifice.

“Thou hast hitherto seen nought but huts and chapels,” said Aristotle, as much ashamed of the meanness of the Russian capital as if it had been his native city. “Thou wilt see the humble palace of the Great Prince, and thou wilt ask—‘Where then is Moscow?’ This is my answer—Moscow, the splendid capital of Ivan, exists as yet only in his heart and thoughts. But what he thinks is as sure to be fulfilled as the decrees of fate. I will add, too, Moscow existeth in the artists whom thou broughtest with thee, and in those who arrived before thee. Ere a dozen years be passed it shall be created, and thou thyself shalt wonder at the metamorphosis. Thou see’st how many foreigners we meet—these are all materials for the future grandeur and magnificence of Moscow. Look, what an extent of houses and churches are pulled down beyond the wall of the Kreml, and imagine how strong, how invincible must be the will of a ruler, who hath dared to lay the hammer of destruction on so much that was ancient, so much that was holy. And what murmurs were excited by this innovation? . . . The ignorant crowd looketh not at future advantages. Disturb but its present welfare, even for its own good, and it is discontented. I will tell thee what I propose to do in my plan. Yonder, next to thy lodging, will be erected the gate of Flora and Laura, and above it will soar a magnificent spire. Thence will stretch a noble wall, girdling the middle of

the city, and decorating it with its beautiful towers. The stone house of thy host, and this other here, the dwelling of the Mayor of Moscow, are but the first-born of a great family, which will not delay to come into the world. The architects who came with thee, are entrusted with the erection of a splendid mansion for the reception of ambassadors, and of a palace for the Great Prince. Add to this a multitude of noble stone churches, which are to be built, and the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Mother of God, committed to my care. Thou see’st the enormous piles of materials which crowd the Kreml and choke it up; and thou mayest calculate what can be constructed out of them. This is only the half of what I am preparing for the cathedral. From these piles the genius of Italy is to erect an eternal monument to itself, or a trophy of Art’s defeat by the Material. Woe to me if the victory fall to the latter!”

“Far from thee be the gloomy thought. Never be hope extinguished in thy soul, and may it ever light thee to thy future creation!”

“Ay, away with the gloomy thought! . . . Thou see’st these huts in hundreds, these churches in dozens; they will come down at one word from Iv n . . . Ah, my friend, ’twill be a temple, a real temple to the Mother of God! Future generations, as they enter it, shall pronounce with veneration the name of Fioraventi Aristotle . . . Yes, Antonio, I shall survive in it.”

“The man who can speak so ardently of the future, contemning worldly honour and advantage, must produce something worthy of immortality!” replied Antony, with enthusiasm.

Long they continued to discourse about the splendid church—about the commanding site from which it would overlook the whole city; and in this colloquy they rode up the hill by Spasana-bórou, from whence they could obtain a view over the whole Zaneглиnniaia. Here the glance of the young man was fixed by two specks which darted from opposite sides of the Pool of Neglinnaia. He at last distinguished that these were two boys. They encountered in the midst of the frozen pool, and instantly began a battle with their fists. In a few minutes there extended along each bank a line.

“Ah, there will be some sport!” cried Aristotle. “Presently thou shalt see a specimen of our Russian gallants.”

“What is this?” enquired Ehrenstein.

“A party struggle,” answered the artist smiling. “Our Guelfs and Ghibellines. Thou sawest two boys begin the combat; now these two sparks, thrown by a powerful hand, no sooner come in collision, than you may expect a conflagration. Ride we nearer to the place of action.”

And they hastened along the bank of the pool, by the side of the Kreml.

Both lines, consisting of children, were charging rank against rank with tremendous cries, and engaged in a pugilistic battle. The war-cry on one side was, Zaneглиnniie; on the other, Goródskie (town boys.) Behind them were incessantly formed fresh lines, each composed of taller and stronger lads than the preceding rank; and at length appeared chosen champions. The engagement grew general. They fought in crowds, in lines, hand to hand. The battle was hot. “Warmer than ever in the memory of man,” said the old folks. The spectators, for the most part people of middle or advanced age, composed a black ring on the banks

of the pool. From amongst them arose praises of the victors, or reproaches of the conquered. One deserved the wreath of laurel, another the whip. Incessantly were heard cries, "Our side hath it!" "Brave fellows!" or "Cowards, cravens, pock-puddings!" Only those who were grievously hurt, who had fought away all their strength, or the youngest, yielding their place to older or stronger combatants, left the ranks of the mêlée. Many were seen to be crippled for life, but not one groan was heard. Even their relations, as they led them away from the conflict, neither complained, nor exhibited any violent grief. They only abused them as cowards, or praised them as brave fellows. When they had recovered from their hurts, they placed themselves in the ranks of the spectators; and, with them, took a lively interest in their party, with shouts of praise or insult.

The young physician, through Aristotle, offered his services to those who were hurt. Instead of answering, the fathers placed themselves between their children and the leech, and plainly refused his aid. They would rather see them deformed for life. Assuredly, too, when they reached home, they mixed *Thursday's salt* and coals in water, wherewith to sprinkle their child, on whom had glanced the evil eye of a heretic.

At length the ranks of the mêlée began to grow thinner; the voices to grow still; but it would even now have been difficult to decide which party had won. All at once there thundered along the banks of the pool unanimous shouts of "Mamón!" "Simskoi-Khabar!" and the crowd, as if enchanted, lowered their hands and separated. A deep, a death-like silence ensued.

"What fine fellows!" said Antony; "if I mistake not, the face of one of them is known to me."

"No wonder. It is the son of thy host: he is called by the people, *Khabar*! which meaneth, *winner, gainer*. Seldom happeneth it that his side winneth not in the fist fight; whence he hath gained his title. To-day they have chosen him a new opponent, and apparently a formidable one. Look! what a powerful, active athlete. Their fathers are enemies; the sons are now antagonists. But here, in the ring, where they meet for single combat, they must throw aside all enmity, all unfriendly feeling towards each other. I must explain further, that their blows may only be aimed at that part of the body between the throat and the girdle. Woe to him whose hand touches the face of his opponent! This, in its way, is a chivalrous sport: even here generosity is the device of the combatants."

In reality, hardly had the *fighters* marked out a ring beyond which they were not to pass, when the combatants took off their caps and bowed low on the four sides. Mamón could distinguish among thousands the flashing eye of his father: he saw nothing else, and heard on the Neglinnaia side a deep murmur of praise, uttered by his friends. Simskoi-Khabar beheld his sire's calm, approving glance; the townspeople as silent as a wall of stone. The son of Obrazétz glanced up at the hill of the Kremlin, towards Spasana-bérou There, in a lofty bower, he beheld an open window, and a crimson veil floating within it. He knew well whose hand had displayed that signal, and he gaily advanced to his antagonist.

The young men met, and kissed each other.

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An ominous silence! . . . the thousands feared to breathe—to remove their eyes even for an instant from the spectacle. Then the rivals measured each other with their eyes . . . They prepared for the encounter. A confident smile gleamed on Khabar's lips, while those of Mamón seemed to quiver with a kind of convulsion.

"Poor Mamón! I will wager a hundred to one that the son of Obrazétz will win," said Ehrenstein, warming more and more. "Each motion of his, even now, is as a well-poised sword and a firm shield. O, that I might cross my good blade with that active gallant!"

"Gently, young leech!" replied Aristotle; "thy blood speaketh in vain. Thou hast forgotten that it is thy business to heal wounds, not to give them. To put thy mind at rest, I will add, here fighting with arms is only permitted in trial of battle."

A loud laugh from the people interrupted his explanation. It accompanied the fall of Mamón's son, who had lost his balance while planting a violent blow on his opponent; which the latter had dexterously parried. Simskoi did not hesitate a moment, but offering his arm, he raised him from the ground. Sullenly and abashed arose young Mamón, without so much as thanking his generous rival. On this occasion he showed himself the worthy son of his father. But the people did not suffer this ingratitude: on every side arose shouts of disapprobation. "Foul, foul! Bow; thy head will not fall off! Bow! bow!" And young Mamón was compelled to bend his head. Then recommenced the battle. The glances of each combatant kept wakeful watch—followed each slightest intention—the faintest shade of will. A hardly perceptible movement of the hand, a bend of shoulder, head, or knee, is a triumph or a defeat. Their thought in an instant divining a feint or even an intention, calculates the results, profits by them, parries a blow, or prepares against a fall. Pass but this instant, and victory is your antagonist's. Suddenly is heard a dull blow; it is echoed by the heart of every spectator; and young Mamón falls like a tree, hewn through at the root. Blood spouts from his mouth. Shouts of joy resound on the town side. The murmur of the mill-wheels repeated, as it were, the cry of victory. The conqueror was overwhelmed by compliments—the beaten man surrounded by his kinsmen and friends, who bore him half-dead home.

Aristotle rode up to the voevoda Obrazétz.—"What wouldst thou have done," he asked him, "if thy son had not raised his antagonist?"

"What? I would have renounced him!" replied the voevoda; and seeing his guest, he hastily turned his horse and galloped away.

"A strange man, that host of thine!" said Aristotle to his companion. "He feareth the devil, like a child frightened by its nurse's tale. He hateth those of other religions, and counteth them worse than any unclean animal. His enemy on the field of battle he will unpitifully slaughter; and yet his honour, his generosity, are extraordinary. With his own hands he would slay a soldier for plundering a prisoner; and he is ready to slay his own son if he do any thing which he counteth base."

"It seemeth I am fated to know his worth only through others," said Antony with some pique. "If, however, my respected friend could but bring us together"

"Time—time—and patience," replied the artist.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRIAL.

They entered the palace of the Great Prince. At this moment the dvorétzkoï, with low reverences, was conducting to the door a Jew, who appeared to have just come out of the interior chambers. The artist and the leech were met by several courtiers.

"Thou assuredly desirest to know something of the faces that surround the Great Prince," said Aristotle to his young companion; "as they make their appearance; and according to their degree of distinction, I will satisfy thy curiosity. This man here, who is conducting the Jew" . . .

"The Russians shun even Christians that are not of their faith, and yet doth their lord associate with a Jew?" interrupted Antony: "that is right strange!"

"To him every instrument is welcome that can be useful," replied the artist; "but this Jew is the confidential agent of the celebrated Hebrew of Kaffa, Khozi-Kokos, who procured Iván the alliance of the Khan of the Crimea; and through that neither more nor less than the security of Russia. And that slender, short, old man, who is conducting him, is the Signor Castellano of the Great Prince—Roussálka, a crafty fox, such as there be few. Is it necessary to the sovereign to reach any object by a somewhat foul path, some object useful to himself and to the empire—he maketh of his castellan a bridge; and over that, without so much as dirtying his feet, he goeth to what he would. In the mean time, Roussálka is bemuddled from head to heel. Not long ago he cooked up a masterly dish of policy; he arrested death itself by the bedside of the Prince of Veréia, until he had time to make a will in favour of Iván; and this will—not a trifle, ye must think—gave Iván the towns of Yaroslávetz, Veréia, Biaylo-ozero, which lay in his dominions like a mote in the eye. Ask not with what instruments the operation was performed; suffice it to say, the mote was removed from Russia. That—is the boyárin Mamon. Thou hast already seen him. They could not have given him a more appropriate name. Beware of that serpent, I should have said, had he lurked beneath the rose. The little creature next him is the deacon Borodátii, the historian of the Great Prince's campaigns. His writings are as luxuriant as the curls of his head—his eloquence as lengthy as his beard. His heart is that of a dove—or, to speak more correctly, that of a roasted apple. A day or two ago, the son of thy host played him an unlucky trick; instead of conducting him home with ceremony and honour, after a drinking-bout with Obrazétz and himself, Khabár swaddled him up, and made him the sport of the people. The Great Prince espoused with warmth the part of his deacon; but to the latter peace and quietness are meat and drink, so he determined at all costs to finish the matter peacefully. The good creature did not hesitate, but gave the Great Prince a description of the wonderful adventures of the beardie mannikin. Iván laughed, and at the prayer of the deacon, who assured him that they had not insulted him, but only laughed at him, pardoned Obrazétz's son. This proceeding

touched Simskoi: he made a humble apology to the person he had outraged. It is a pity Kouritzin is not here: he burneth to make acquaintance with thee. He is Iván's right hand—a wise and honest diplomatist. To the pursuit of abstract science and secret knowledge, he had consecrated some hours—all that were left him from state affairs. But—the Signor Castellano is returning from the inner apartments, probably to call us to the Great Prince's presence."

As he spoke, Roussálka approached and informed them that the Lord Great Prince, Iván Vasssliévitch, commanded them to "behold his imperial eyes."

They entered a chamber of moderate size. Iván Vasssliévitch, robed in a splendid habit, was seated on an ivory chair, on which the skillful and delicate chisel of Grecian art had represented various events of sacred and profane history. Up to this throne was an ascent of three steps, carpeted with *cramoisy* damask. At the sides stood two boyárin, and next to one of them a stool, on which was placed a silver basin and ewer, together with a fine towel, delicately bordered with lace. Over the chair hung the portrait of a woman of exquisite beauty. This picture—or, as our ancestors called it, this *Tsá-révna*, *drawn in a frame*—had been sent to Moscow by Pope Paul II., at the time when a marriage was proposed between the Great Prince and the daughter of Palæologos. On two of the walls were fixed oaken cupboards for plate, &c., inlaid with gold; in which, through glass doors, might be seen silver cups, destined, it would seem, for the use of giants. Add to this two stoves with *lejankas** of Dutch tiles, decorated with flowers and griffins—a most precious piece of furniture in those days. On a table between two windows was perched a green parrot in a pretty cage—languidly drooping its beak.

When Aristotle, who on this occasion served as interpreter, presented the physician, Iván Vasssliévitch fixed a penetrating glance on the stranger—partially rose up from his chair, and extended his hand to the physician, which the latter kissed, kneeling on one knee. Immediately after the Great Prince had been thus polluted by heretic lips, they presented the ewer and basin; but the Prince, by a slight gesture, indicated to the boyárin whose duty it was to perform this service, that his office was not needed.

"O, but how young he is!" said Iván to Aristotle: "he hath no beard."

"In wisdom and learning he hath outstripped his years," replied the artist.

"Right! with you, in warm countries, men ripen sooner than with us. Ay, there came an ambassador from the Roman king—the knight Nicholas Poppel. He was even younger than this."

Then he questioned the physician as to whether he was satisfied with the provisions that had been sent him—whether he wanted for any thing; and, when Antony satisfied him on his own account, he began a conversation with him about the state of Italy, the Pope, the political relations of those governments, and the opinion which they had of Russia. His sensible questions, and occasionally sensible answers, formed a singular contrast

* The *stove*—that universal appendage to a Russian room—is used as a bed by the peasants. It is therefore constructed in the cottages with a kind of broad platform, about a yard and a half above the floor, on which the peasant spreads his shóubn, and sleeps; this is called a *lejanka*—a lying-down place.—T. B. S.

with the coarse forms of his age, his character, and country. Satisfied with Ehrenstein's replies, he more than once repeated to Aristotle, with evident delight—"Thou art right: he is of the youngest; but he is early wise." At length he turned the conversation to Antony's methods of cure.

"How dost thou discover what aileth a man?" he enquired, turning to the physician.

"By what the pulse of the arm of itself informeth us, and by the appearance of the tongue," replied Ehrenstein.

"Of that we will make instant trial," said Iván Vassilievitch, and gave command that all the courtiers should immediately hasten to the chamber of audience.

They all entered, one after the other, pale, trembling, expecting something terrible from the suddenness of the order. They were commanded to stand in a single line, to open their mouths, and to hold out their hands. Even here was preserved the order of precedence, which had been shortly before introduced, and was strictly enforced. At this inspectorial parade, it was droll to behold the terror painted on their long faces: they could not have been in a less fright, if they had been preparing to undergo an operation. It was hardly possible to refrain from laughing at the singular collection of grimaces offered by the poor patients, as they protruded their tongues and held out their hands. One, with tears in his eyes, lolled forth his tongue, like a calf which they are preparing to slaughter: that of another trembled, like the fork of a serpent: a third opened his mouth wide, like a jaded horse when it yawns. The physician himself laughed in spite of all he could do. When the unfortunate wretches were informed that there was to be an inspection into the state of their health, in many of them the thought of being enchanted by the German sorcerer, acted so violently as to throw them into a fever: others hardly escaped a different disorder. They muttered all the prayers they knew: some, notwithstanding the glance of Iván was fixed upon them with all its electric terror, were forced by despair to cry aloud—"Lord, have mercy upon us!" "Lord, let thy servant depart in peace!" Antony made an inspection of each; to each, through the medium of Aristotle, he put the questions enjoined by his science; and he broke the chains of each in turn, with the sentence—that he was well, and in need of no medicine whatever. "The nightingale ceased its song, but still they listened on;" that is to say, the leech left off his examination, but all the patients continued to hold out their tongues and extend their shaking fists. The sovereign was obliged to order that both the one member and the other should be restored to its ordinary position. What sprinklings of holy water—what exorcisms awaited them at home! Terror long held these suffering worthies in its claws; but stronger than all it agitated Borodátii and—who would have thought it?—Mamón. For this reason, Antony wished to make some sport with them, and particularly with Mamón, for whom he felt an aversion.

"One hath no bile at all," he said; "the other too much. In time, this superabundance and this deficiency may cause them a serious illness."

"And is there no remedy for this?" asked Iván Vassilievitch.

"Yea, my lord; by transfusing the blood of

one into the veins of the other," answered Antony.

Mamón's lips turned white, and trembled; the tiny deacon's beard absolutely jumped.

"Jest not with the prince," said Aristotle to his young friend: "would it be wonderful if he should desire to make trial of this horrible method on his boyárens?"

"But," continued the leech, "the remedy which I have hinted at demandeth great caution, and is therefore perilous. In his last illness, Pope Innocent VIII. desired to have recourse to it. The experiment was first tried on three boys of ten years old; but as the trial did not at all succeed, and the boys died, the holy father would not consent to submit to it. All that can be done, therefore, is for the person who hath a superabundance of bile to be as quiet and tranquil as possible; and for him who hath a deficiency, to stir his blood by more frequent exercise."

The Great Prince seemed much pleased with the knowledge and explanations of the physician: for which reason he gave an order to Mamón that all inhabitants of Moscow afflicted with any disease, should without delay present themselves to the court leech, or send for him to show him their tongue and hold out their hand. For the disobedient, a penalty was added.

"To business! I have in my house a patient," said Iván Vassilievitch: "canst thou cure him?"

He rose from his chair and approached the parrot. The winged flutterer was really sick: a film was on his tongue. Iván Vassilievitch showed him to the physician, adding, that Phomínishna was very fond of him.

Antony blushed, and was hesitating whether to refuse to perform the fantastical desire of the Great Prince; "but induced by a look from Aristotle, and by the thought, that to a woman—a weak, tender creature—her pet is very dear, he replied—"We must see his tongue too."

"Nóvgorod and the Horde we have managed," said the Great Prince; "but here what are we to do? The bird is not large; but we cannot make him do what doth not please him. Perhaps he will obey the Great Princess, whom he loveth much."

"Love is ever stronger than power!" exclaimed Antony, inspired by the nobleness of his character, and his wish to commence the part of a friend to humanity, and counsellor to the Tsar, which his dreams had painted in such brilliant colours.

It might be thought, judging by the character of Iván, that the artist did not venture to translate this apothegm of the incautious young man: but, on the contrary, he interpreted it exactly to the prince. Aristotle, on this occasion, well understood the Great Prince as posterity knew him, when it reproached Vassilii Ivanovitch with being unlike his father in this respect—viz. that the latter "*loved to meet with opposition, and favoured those who contradicted him.*" We must remark, however, that he loved opposition in words, but not in deeds.

"Is it so, fair youth?" cried the Great Prince, laughing; "look ye; the parrot, though more reasonable than other birds, is yet, notwithstanding, caged; which proveth that he is not completely reasonable. 'Tis you, Germans, who imprisoned him. As for me, love and gentleness are excellent where all are children of one united, harmonious family, so reasonable that

they understand the will of the father. 'He desireth of us peace and order,' they say, 'for our own good;' but what wilt thou say, good youth, if, in the parent's absence, the prodigal children depart from their sire's house—if each, at his own pleasure, fence off a portion of their common inheritance—if they will neither hear nor obey their mother—if they even rage against her who gave them food and drink? The father's house is on fire—no man cometh to extinguish it; robbers come and plunder it—the children laugh. The sire cometh—how is he to curb them, unite them, bring them to order? By gentleness, think ye? . . . The mother had tried that already . . . No! by wisdom and power, by strength of soul. But when the father hath brought back the children to obedience, and they feel their fault—will not love then bring back peace on every side? It may be so: but we have not yet come to that, nor shall we soon come to it. Is it not true, Aristotle? Thou knowest our people better."

Aristotle, pleased with the wise words of the Great Prince, confirmed his assertions, like a master who is well contented by the answers of a clever pupil at an examination. As if for a demonstration of his argument, the Sovereign seized the parrot by the head, and skilfully held it, while the bird submitted to the magic terror of his eye. The film was successfully removed by the leech.

The cure of the parrot, and the examination of the courtiers, did not conclude the trial of the physician. The Great Prince commanded him and Aristotle to wait in the middle izba. Half an hour had not elapsed ere he came out to them in a shóuba and bonnet, and with a wave of his staff invited them to follow him.

At the Red Stairs was standing a *tapkan* (a covered winter sledge,) to which were harnessed two *sanniks* (so they called horses in their winter caparison.) The pads were of velvet, the rings and plates on the pads and bridles were gilded. All this had been sent from Lithuania. The horses were driven by a position, riding on one of them. When Iván Vassilievitch was helped into the *tapkan*, which might be recognized as the Great Prince's by the double-headed eagle fixed on the front, some of the guards rode before it, crying—"Make way, make way!" Six of the soldiers rode at the sides, guarding every moment the equipage from overbalancing, and supporting it with their bodies at every steep declivity; even a small inclination was dangerous, as the horses were harnessed to the carriage only by traces, and without a pole, (remark that the pole was considered by our ancestors as an accursed thing.) A number of boyarins rode behind, among whom were the artist and the physician. They went at a foot's pace; the moment that the loud cry—"Make way, make way!" was heard, all who were passing in the street took off their caps and prostrated themselves on the ground.

"This slavish custom," said Aristotle to his young comrade, "was brought hither, with many similar ones, from the Tartars. Their domination corroded this country, as it were, with a strong rust; and the Russians will be long ere they wipe it off. Thus, the conquered—even in spite of themselves—acquire the character of the conquerors, notwithstanding the hatred they feel towards them."

"Happy is the conquered," replied Ehrenstein, "if his new master stand upon a higher

step of civilization than himself. Woe to him if he fall under the rule of such as a Tartar! What cannot force do?"

"'Tis a pity that even what is good, even enlightenment, can only be infused into a rude people by a wise violence and an inflexible will; for this mass is indispensable to a vigorous ruler like him who is now riding before us. I counsel thee, my friend, to act for the good of humanity in this country no otherwise than through this powerful conductor."

"Ay, thou and I have made a noble beginning of our achievements," interrupted Antony, in a tone of irony; "thou, preparing to erect a wondrous temple to the Mother of God, burnest bricks and mixest mortar; and I, though not, like thee, endowed with divine gifts, yet arriving here from a distant country to cast my mite into the treasury of science, I . . . I cure parrots' tongues, and feel the pulses of a crowd of courtly slaves! Truly the beginning doth not promise much."

"Antonio—Antonio! Is it thou that speakest thus . . . But two days here—thy work not yet begun, and already thy young blood rebelleth against reason: the least inconvenience driveth thee far from thy noble aim. Is it thus men go to combat for a crown of victory! What wouldst thou have said, hadst thou been in my place? . . . Have I been deceived in thee? . . . Be that as it may, I recognize no more in thee than that firm soul that was but lately ready to battle with Destiny itself!"

"I confess my fault, my noble friend! I confess it. My mind still requireth support; my education is not yet finished. O, be thou my guide, my preceptor! Pardon my thoughtless words, and attribute them to the new impressions of these two days. The execution of the Lithuanians—my host's causeless hatred—the estrangement of almost all the Muscovites, when I loved them beforehand so warmly—the parrot—the courtiers—the servility—all this hath turned my head."

"I warned thee that thou wouldst find thyself amidst an infant people, that thou wouldst be near the ruler of this people—a man great in many respects, but still belonging to his country and epoch; and even now—I will tell thee beforehand—we are riding to the prison. I am sure he wisheth to show thee his distinguished captives. This time, thou must pardon him as a ruler who desireth to show triumphantly how he hath succeeded, by force of his own mind, in binding with chains the terrible foes who so long kept Russia in discord and alarm. He is a Hercules, but still an infant Hercules. He rejoiceth that even in his cradle he hath strangled serpents; and he delighteth in exhibiting them dead or dying. I will add, remember the time in which we live, the country in which we are . . . Remember the head of our own church, Paul II., who presided in person at the torture: remember Sixtus IV., Stephen of Moldavia, called his son, who made cripples of his prisoners: Galeazzo Sforza, . . . I will say no more. These examples are enough to pacify thy displeasure at the spectacle which awaiteth thee."

Aristotle had scarcely time to say this, when the *tapkan* entered the Court of the Prisons. The railings, bristling with spikes, rendered unnecessary any further defence of this place. The guards leaped from their horses, and the gloomy hold was opened in an instant. At the foot of the steps leading to the prison, they as-

sisted the Great Prince to descend from the tankan; the sentinels were all in motion. They consisted of guards who had *kissed the cross* as a pledge of the faithful performance of their duty. At the sight of the Great Prince they grasped their battle-axes, drew themselves up, took off their caps, and made a low obeisance. In the hall the penetrating glance of Iván seemed to mark every thing at once. Further on, when he entered the narrow passages, his eyes gleamed with a savage joy; he felt like the master of a menagerie, who is proud to show to worthy visitors the fierce animals he has caught and keeps in cages; and, indeed, the cells in which the prisoners were confined resembled nothing so much as filthy dens.

"Aristotle," said the Great Prince, "explain to our court leech what fowl are sitting in these coops; and let him examine them, to see how long they will live. The Tartars, thou wottest, I must in any case keep for the future. It may chance we may have to frighten others with them. And the woman, thou knowest, is even now 'a sheep for the devil.'"

This plain explanation, translated by Aristotle to Antony, promised the latter an opportunity of beginning the labours of benevolence, for which he had been preparing himself as he travelled to Moscow. In the first apartment they found a whole family of Tartars. Men and women—mothers and children—husbands and wives—all were piled pell-mell, some on benches, others on the ground. The filth and stench were insupportable. Their pale livid faces, their downcast haggard look, described their miserable condition more eloquently than words.

"Wouldst thou believe it," said Aristotle, "that yonder lean wretch with saffron eyes, who hath just arisen before the Great Prince, was the Tsar of Kazán, Aleghám? His kingdom, not long since, was formidable to Russia—a few months past, a Muscovite general took him prisoner, and placed another Tsar on his throne. Admire here the vicissitudes of human destiny. Not long ago he ruled a mighty kingdom, and now he hath not where to lay his head. To the ancestors of these Tartars the Russian princes paid homage—from them they begged permission to reign, they held their stirrup, they paid tribute to them. But now . . . O, surely, kings ought to come hither to learn humility! But . . . such is the blindness of man—thou seest with what triumph the Great Prince beholdeth his prisoner. His liberation cannot be—ought not to be thought of. The entreaties of the Princes of Shibai and Nogai, his kinsmen, have had no success. There have been many discussions on this subject with Iván, in which they sent one another *heavy compliments and light gifts*. But the only gainer in this intercourse was Iván. He discovered the weakness of the Tartar princes, and perhaps found among them enemies to themselves. I know no ruler who so well knoweth how to take advantage of circumstances: I said that Aleghám's liberation was a thing not to be thought of; but, from what Iván himself hath hinted, I think we may endeavour to better his condition."

Conforming himself to this hint, the young physician said—"If the Great Prince desire that his royal prisoner should live, he must transfer him with his family to a better and more spacious habitation, and give him the opportunity of breathing fresh air. If this be not done, I cannot answer for his life lasting more than a few weeks."

Iván Vassilievitch became thoughtful—"Ay, this man is still necessary to me," he continued half aloud; and ordered Mamón, who understood the Tartar language, as did many Russians in those days, to inform Aleghám that he would immediately send him with his two wives to Vologda, and his mother, brothers, and sisters, to Kargopol, on the Biáyo-Ozero. "There," added he, "he may walk about as he pleaseth. I will allow him for his subsistence a pittance of two *altines** a day."

When this was interpreted to Aleghám, the Tsar of Kazán threw himself at the feet of the Great Prince: his example was followed by all his family, except one of his wives. She was about to catch him by his robe, to restrain him from this slavish expression of gratitude, and cried out with indignation—"What wouldst thou do, Tsar of Kazán!" But Aleghám was already at Iván's feet, and the Tsarina threw upon her husband a glance of profound contempt.

This woman afterwards became the wife of Tsar Makhmet Amin: she remembered the humiliation of her first husband, and succeeded in exciting her second against Iván.

A new apartment—Again remarkable prisoners—again Tartars—again proofs of Iván's wisdom and firmness, by which he had tranquillized the East. Shut up here were two brothers; one a hoary-headed old man, the other of an age bordering on that of his companion. Seated side by side, with their hands twined round each other's neck, they were gazing one another in the face. In that they beheld their country, their heaven, their kinsmen, and their friends—all that was most precious—that was lost to them for ever. In this attitude the Great Prince found them. Confused, they untwined their embrace, and remained seated.

"Thou wouldst have guessed that these two are brothers, even if I had not informed thee," said Aristotle; "scions of that mighty power which wellnigh overwhelmed Russia, and was thus diverted from Europe. In fact, these are the brothers of Mengli-Ghiréi, Khan of the Crimea, and best friend and ally of Iván. They are Nordooúlát and Aidár."

"Friend—ally?" enquired Antony with astonishment; "how reconcile that with their imprisonment?"

"I will tell thee more. Nordooúlát, the grey-haired man, who is gazing so bitterly at the Great Prince, served him in the war against the *Great or Golden Horde*, and its Tsar Akhmet—a war in which was decided the question, whether Russia was or was not to be the slave of the East; whether a new deluge of barbarians was to pour into Europe; but" . . .

Here was heard the imploring voice of Andriousha, Aristotle's son. Without being remarked, he had suddenly made his way to the side of the Great Prince, who was caressingly stroking his head.

"Make me a present, Iván Vassilievitch, of these two poor old men," said Andriousha, fondling the stern ruler.

The Great Prince laughed, and asked the boy what he would do with the prisoners.

"I will give them their liberty, that they may bless thy name," replied Andriousha.

"I grant it. Give these two their freedom," said Iván Vassilievitch, turning to Mamón; "and send them to Vologda. Appoint them

* Russian money was anciently counted by "*altines*;" each *altine* contained three *kopeks*.—T. B. S.

there an ample maintenance. This I do for the sake of my son's godson."

The intelligent boy took care to beg nothing more.

The artist and the physician thought that the Great Prince had decided on this generous conduct in consequence of overhearing their conversation, and subdued by the eloquent sorrow of Nordooilat, once his faithful servant. Aristotle, however, was not surprised when the Great Prince took him aside, and added in a low voice—

"It was opportunely that Andriousha spoke for them: the Khan of the Golden Horde entreateth me, through his ambassador, to send Nordooilat to him. Methinks thou must have met of late an accursed Hebrew at my palace. That same Hebrew hath filched from the Khan's ambassador a letter to Nordooilat, and hath succeeded in replacing it unperceived. Even without a written letter, I should have straightway guessed their cunning plots. My friend Mengli-Ghiréi wellnigh got himself into the wolf's mouth—Coward! he feared the threats of the Golden Horde, and sent to implore me to liberate his brother, with whom he meaneth to reign conjointly. But I will show him he is wrong; and he himself will hereafter be glad at what I have done. The King of Poland inviteth Aidár; Nordooilat is clever; Aidár is not, but dangerous notwithstanding. My foes have plotted craftily: in open daylight they would set a trap in sight of the fox. I will show them my tail: What! are we fools? We can count five on our fingers. . . . In Mengli-Ghiréi I have a faithful friend, and he will do as I would have him. They desire me to put in his place a man more fierce and clever; I shall have them safer at Vologda, where they can receive no more letters, and will never behold the Tartar's crafty face; but still I will keep my word to Andriousha—at Vologda they shall be free."

These words, when translated to Antony, satisfactorily explained the Tsar's object in keeping in prison the brothers of Mengli-Ghiréi, the friend and ally of Iván, and found in the young man's heart an excuse for his tortuous policy.

A new apartment.

Here the Great Prince rapped with his staff at a grating; at the knock there looked out an old woman, who was fervently praying on her knees. She was dressed in a much-worn high cap, and in a short veil, poor, but white as new-fallen snow; her silver hair streamed over a threadbare mantle: it was easy to guess that this was no common woman. Her features were very regular, in her dim eyes was expressed intellect, and a kind of stern greatness of soul. She looked proudly and steadily at the Great Prince.

"For whom wert thou praying, Marphousha?" asked the sovereign.

"For whom but for the dead!" she sullenly replied.

"But for whom in particular, if I may make bold to ask?"

"Ask concerning that of my child, thou son of a dog—of him who was called thy brother, whom thou murderedst—of Novgorod, which thou hast drowned in blood and covered with ashes!"

"O, ho, ho! . . . Thou hast not forgotten thy folly, then—Lady of Novgorod the Great."

"I was such once, my fair lord!"

At these words she arose.

"Wilt thou not think again?"

"Of what? . . . I said that I was praying for the dead. Thy Moscow, with all its hovels, can twice a-year be laid in ashes, and twice built up again. The Tartar hath held it two ages in slavery. . . . It pined, it pined away, and yet it remains whole. It hath but changed one bondage for another. But once destroy the queen—Novgorod the Great—and Novgorod the Great will perish for ever."

"How canst thou tell that?"

"Can ye raise up a city of hewn stone in a hundred years?"

"I will raise one in a dozen."

"Ay, but this is not in the fairy tale, where 'tis done as soon as said. Call together the Hanse traders whom thou hast driven away."

"Ha, hucksteress! thou mournest for the traders more than for Novgorod itself."

"By my huckstering she grew not poor, but rich."

"Let me but jingle a piece of money, and straight will fly the merchants from all corners of the world, greedy for my grosches."

"Recall the chief citizens whom thou hast exiled to thy towns."

"Cheats, knaves, rebels! they are not worth this!"

"When was power in the wrong? Where is the water of life that can revive those thou hast slain? Even if thou couldst do all this, liberty, liberty would be no more for Novgorod, Iván Vassilievitch; and Novgorod will never rise again! It may live on awhile like lighted flax, that neither flameth nor goeth out, even as I live in a dungeon!"

"It is thine inflexible obstinacy that hath ruined both of ye. I should like to have seen how thou wouldst have acted in my place."

"Thou hast done thy work, Great Prince of Moscow, I—mine. Triumph not over me, in my dungeon, at my last hour."

Marpha Borétzkaia coughed, and her face grew livid: she applied the end of her veil to her lips, but it was instantly stained with blood, and Iván remarked this, though she endeavoured to conceal it.

"I am sorry for thee, Marpha," said the Great Prince in a compassionate tone.

"Sharp is thy glance. . . . What! doth it delight thee? . . . Spread this kerchief over Novgorod. . . . 'Twill be a rich pall!" . . . she added, with a smile.

"Let me in! let me in! . . . I cannot bear it. . . . Let me go in to her!" cried Andriousha, bursting into tears.

On the Great Prince's countenance was mingled compassion and vexation. He, however, lifted the latch of the door, and let the son of Aristotle pass in to Borétzkaia.

Andrea kissed her hand. Borétzkaia uttered not a word; she mournfully shook her head, and her warm tears fell upon the boy's face.

"Ask him how many years she can live," said the Great Prince to Aristotle, in a whisper.

"It is much, much, if she live three months; but, perhaps, 'twill be only till spring," answered Antony. "No medicine can save her: that blood is a sure herald of death."

This reply was translated to Iván Vassilievitch in as low a tone as possible, that Borétzkaia might not hear it; but she waved her hand, and said calmly—"I knew it long ago" . . .

"Hearken, Marpha Isakovna; if thou wilt, I will give thee thy liberty, and send thee into another town."

"Another town . . . another place . . . God hath willed it so without thee!"

"I would send thee to Bayjetzkoi-Verkb."

"'Tis true, that was our country. If I could but die in my native land!"

"Then God be with thee: there thou mayest say thy prayers, give alms to the churches. I will order thy treasury to be delivered up to thee—and remember not the Great Prince of Moscow in anger."

She smiled. Have ye ever seen something resembling a smile on the jaws of a human skull? "Farewell, we shall never meet again," said the Great Prince.

"We shall meet at the judgment-seat of God!" was the last reply of Boretzkaia.

Thoughtfully departed the Great Prince from the dungeon; thoughtful, without looking round him, he passed softly by the abodes of the other prisoners; and when he felt the fresh air blowing on him, he crossed himself, bowing towards a neighbouring church, and ejaculated—"Wilt thou then judge thy servant Iván, and not the Prince of Moscow!"

At this moment, from the steps in front of the Black Izbá, there opened before the artist a view of the spot on which was to be built the Cathedral of the Annunciation: he grew thoughtful—his heart and soul flew thither.

"Hark thee, Aristotle," said the Great Prince to him, laying his hand on the Italian's shoulder: "thou must prepare more of these railings. At night I mean to close up the streets with them from drunken and evil-disposed people."

The artist fell, as it were from heaven into the mud. He turned red, then pale, glanced at his companion, and—said not a word.

On the road he related to Antony the story of Márpha of Novgorod, and how with her had died in Russia the vigour of the commonality, which had been brought from Germany to Novgorod and Pskoff by the commercial spirit; but he said nothing about the subject of the Great Prince's last words.

"Iván doth not always chant such a dirge of mercy?" remarked the leech.

By their side Andriúsha gaily pranced along on a fiery steed.

CHAPTER XIV

THE PATIENTS.

"And what if I thy bold-faced saucy cheat
Before the time to all the world discover?" . . .
PÓUSHKIN.

FROM this moment Andriúsha was a frequent visitor to Ehrenstein: he taught him Russian; and the intelligent pupil, with the aid of the Tchekh language, made rapid progress. It was delightful to see how the boy dressed himself in magisterial importance during the lessons; and how obediently the Paduan bachelor listened. Sometimes the master would knit his brows when the pupil's obstinate tongue—accustomed to the easy sounds of the Italian—refused to utter the sometimes difficult combinations of Russian consonants. The lesson ended, the professor and disciple were gone, and in their place appeared friendship with her smiles, her lively conversation, and caresses. Friendship! when one of them was more than twenty-five; and the other not above half that age! . . . what matter? Both were young in soul—both felt aspirations

after all that was noble, and a mysterious attraction for each other. They seemed to have riveted some indescribable chain which fate alone could undo. They called each other friend, and could not understand how strangers could find any thing extraordinary in their connexion. Antony was alone in a foreign land: the artist, in consequence of the multitude of his various occupations, could but seldom visit him. The master of the house, and almost all the Russians, continued to estrange themselves, or rather to shun him with abhorrence; Andrea was the only being in Russia that loved him, that understood him, that communicated with him the thoughts of an intellect early developed, and a warm and benevolent soul. To Andriúsha no less did the young physician become something indispensable—a fifth element, as it were: without him the world would have been a blank. Born in Italy, he still remembered, like some spirit exiled to this dull earth from another and brighter world—he remembered with lively regret the luxuriance of southern nature, the skies of those lands—their groves of orange and cypress; and it seemed as if there breathed on him from Antony the warm odorous air of that blessed region. Something strange and mysterious, too, attracted him to the young German . . . what it was he could never describe, even to himself. The boy warmly loved one other being, good and beautiful too—but this being he loved less than Antony. This was Obrazétz's daughter, Anastasia. Frequently did he go from Ehrenstein to her, and from her to his friend; and this intercourse, which began in innocence, established between them a kind of magic, threefold bond.

Ehrenstein had never seen Anastasia; but had often listened to the steps of her little feet upon the ceiling of his chamber. Often Andriúsha would relate how beautiful she was, how good, how kind, how she loved him, how she kissed him. This close proximity to a young maiden, to whom the descriptions of his friend, as well as his own imagination, gave all that was nearest perfection, external as well as intellectual; the mystery that surrounded her; her close retirement; the difficulty of beholding her—all this awoke in Antony's heart a feeling to which he had hitherto been a stranger. He frequently thought upon her, listened to any story about her with peculiar delight, kissed Andriúsha more frequently, when the latter mentioned that Anastasia had kissed him—and often beheld in his dreams a lovely female form, which he called by her name. In one word, he was in love with her, though he had never seen her. But soon he called this feeling folly—the caprice of solitude; and he extinguished it by renewed application to his science, to which he devoted himself with fresh warmth and sedulity. If he mentioned any thing about Anastasia now, it was only as a jest; even the sound of her step overhead he now learned to bear with indifference, as we listen to the unvarying beat of the pendulum of a clock. The visitors who soon besieged him on all sides, aided him to cast away every thought about her; and at last Muscovite patients presented themselves to him. They had, then, thrown aside their hatred of the foreigner, and their dread of the sorcerer, as he had been hitherto accounted. At last, to work, Antony! Thy heart bounds with the sweet hope of helping suffering humanity; let them besiege thee night and day—let them give thee no rest! These

toils, these importunities will be delightful to thee. Thou wouldst not exchange them for all the lazy luxury of wealth.

"Who is there?"

"I, your most obsequious servant, his highness's interpreter, Bartholoméw; and I come not alone. With me there is an obsequious patient, if you will permit him to be so, right worshipful Master Leech."

"I pray ye, enter."

And—dot-and-go-one, dot-and-go-one!—there glided into the chamber the splendidly illuminated face of the printer, the terrible vanquisher of all women from the Rhine to the Yaçuza. Clinging to him by his clawlike fingers, there crawled in, as if for contrast, an animated skeleton, covered with a wrinkled hide; its head and chin were fringed with a few remnants of white hair, and it was swathed in a shōuba. He seemed to breathe out, as it were, an odour of corruption. This being, which had once been man, might have dwelt on earth perhaps eighty years; by his eyes, his lips, his voice, by each convulsive jerk that replaced movement, death seemed to be saying—"Forget not that I am here; I sit firm—my respite is but short." But the man—for man he once had been—had forgotten this, and was come to ask Antony the leech, the Almayne sorcerer, who could restore youth and strength to the aged, by transfusing into their veins the blood of children—he came to ask him for life, life but for ten or twenty years. He had a young wife, he was rich, he must live on awhile. Antony himself was an aged man: they had beheld him by night, through the window, old—by day, he transformed himself into a handsome blooming youth. Who was there, in all Moscow, that knew not this? . . .

The living skeleton looked wistfully, yet with fear, at the leech, and still more beseechingly he pointed to a boy of ten years old, who was standing, in a kind of awe, by the door. Nothing, it seemed, could be better chosen; just the age, just the appearance, that the German had described to the Great Prince as proper for the great operation of restoring youth.

Antony himself was petrified. "No," he thought, "never will I consent to this frightful experiment! And even if it should succeed . . . at the expense of this child's young, blooming life, to prolong for a year or two the mere animal existence of a dotard! who perhaps is a burden to the earth . . . Never, never!"

"Fear not, most high worshipful sir!" said Bartholoméw with a simper, "that, in case of the death of this boy, either you or this respectable gentleman will have to answer for it. Fear not, fear not, this lad is—a *kholop*."

"I understand not the meaning of '*kholop*,'" replied Antony; "I only know that he is a human being."

"Human! . . . hm! . . . a human being . . . I have the honour to inform you he is a *kholop*—a slave. Be assured, I am myself exceeding cautious in these matters; and therefore have I looked into the *soudëbnik* of the Great Prince of All Russia. There, the law is clearly laid down: 'Bot whosoever, being a lord, schal peradventure sinne, and bete hys *kholop*, or his bondwoman, so thatte y^e sam dye therof; thanne yn no cas schal y^e lorde bee judged or accounted guilty therof.' When translated, this means . . . (here the eager interpreter turned the text into German.) In case of the death of this lad, we shall say that his

master *sinned*; and 'tis finished. This we have settled with the right worshipful baron—the richest, and, I must add, the most generous of mortals. This agreement is sealed with a solemn oath."

During this lively conversation, which the living skeleton understood by the citation of the text, he called the boy to him, convulsively patted him on the head with a fatherly tenderness, padding with his bony fingers on the downy cheek, then leered at the physician, as though he would say—"Look, 'tis like a ripe cherry!"

"Harkye, Bartholoméw!" said the young physician, sternly—"Once for all I tell thee, if ever thou darest again to come to me with such propositions, I will throw thee out of the window."

The eager and submissive interpreter of all work by no means expected such a reply. He was altogether disconcerted, and in a pitiful mumbling tone he continued, laying on every word, and almost every syllable, a comma emphasis, like that made by his leg—"You . . . yourself . . . most high wor . . . shipful . . . said . . . to the Great Prince" . . .

"True, true! I was in the wrong. But, to console this decrepit old man of thine, I will give him the elixir of life—not long invented. Tell him, that 'tis a pity he could not have made use of it some twenty years sooner: then he would have lived twenty years longer. But even as it is, if he will take ten drops of it morning and evening . . . I hope it will strengthen the old man . . . keep him up, if but for a time" . . .

A phial of the elixir was given to the walking skeleton, with a translation of the physician's directions. The dotard's trembling, bony hand laid on the table a *schiffsnobel*. A *schiffsnobel*! Whatever you may think, the fee was a princely one, judging from the fact, that even Ivan Vassilievitch himself was wont to send to the kinsmen of his friends, to Tsarinas, to their children, a *schiffsnobel* at a time—it was very rare indeed if he gave two. Notwithstanding the splendour of the fee, the physician returned the money, saying that he would accept it when the medicine began to act. With this, he conducted the patient and his go-between to the door.

The elixir, it seemed, did not operate so powerfully as the decrepit old man had hoped. He laid all the blame on the boy, his *kholop*, whom, as Bartholoméw had said, the physician had desired to save; and he *did* "sin"—by dashing out the boy's brains. But "in thys cas, y^e judges didde" not "account hym guilty—nor judge hym," because the laws were not written by slaves. The slave was buried, and nothing more was said about it. Within a week, however, a higher Judge had summoned the lord also before his judgment-seat.

On the next day, late in the evening, came another tap at the door.

"Who is there?"

"'Tis I, if I may venture to say so; your most devoted servant, the printer Bartholoméus."

"Come in."

"I am not alone, I have . . . with me" . . .

"Remember our agreement, Master Bartholoméw."

"How can I forget it! . . . sooner may my right hand wither away! . . . I have with me . . . a young lady . . . not a dry, decrepit, old dotard, on whom it would be too much honour even to spit . . . No, a young, beautiful lady, whose fingers you would never be tired of kissing . . . the rich widow, Selinova; she is waiting on the stairs; may she enter?"

"If she pleases."

"I suppose she cometh to consult me about a son, a relation—who knoweth?" thought Antony, as he hastily donned a rich mantle.

In reality, there timidly entered the room a pretty woman, of about the same age as Ehrenstein; she seemed quaking in every limb, and nevertheless to be burning with agitation. She did not dare to lift up her eyes . . . soon tears began to stream from them, and she fell at the physician's feet.

"Rise, I entreat you . . . Without this I will do all you desire," said Antony, raising her.

"I will not rise, worthy man, till thou doest what I ask. Be a father, be a brother to me; help me, or I will lay hands on myself!" . . .

And the pretty young woman clasped his knees, sobbing.

"Explain, Bartholomew, what she desireth of me."

"This is the matter," replied the printer with a grin. "This is the same woman . . . I explained, methinks, on the first day of your arrival, most high worshipful sir . . . that she is in love with the son of your host."

The widow Selinova interrupted him in confusion, forgetting that the physician understood very little Russian.—"True, true! for him I forgot virtue while my husband was alive; I forgot my race and blood; I forgot censorious neighbours; shame!—I forgot that there were other people in the world besides him. For him I gave up my soul. When he was leading me astray—when he was turning my head—he called me his bright sun, his never-setting star: he prevailed by such tales as these—'That day when I forget my love, may my swift feet break under me, my manly hands fall powerless; may sand be strewn over my eyes, may my white breast be covered with the plank!' See now, in my blue eyes there is no ray—not a spark. My lover hath no faith in his false heart: all his words are deceit. My beloved is enamoured of another, who dwelleth with the brother of Phominishma. And who is she to rival me? In what is she better than I? Perhaps she is better, because she admits to the bed of Andrei Phomitch a succession of fickle youths! She hath enchanted—the accursed Greek!—my curled lover. Ever since that day, the faithless boy laugheth at my caresses, and answereth my love with such mockery as this—'The heart loveth freedom, and slavery is a shame to the brave! Get thee gone—go to the fiend! If thou wilt not leave me alone, I will take wood from the court, I will make a pile, and I will burn thy fair body even to ashes; I will scatter the dust in the plain, and none shall mourn or weep for thee.' Whatever I do, I cannot cease to love him. I track his steps; I wither away, I pine. Thou see'st I would fain not weep; even though mine eyes were dry, my heart would sob. Have pity on me! have mercy, good man! Tear him from the accursed Greek by the powers of good or ill—restore him to me. Take for thy good service my hammered chests, my precious treasures—pearls of orient! Take all that I have, but give me back my lover as he was of old, my beloved!"

When Selinova had concluded her prayer, Bartholomew translated it as well as he could. Submitting to the prejudices of his times and of his heart, Antony did not laugh at her. He himself, as well as his instructors, was firmly convinced that there exists a secret science

which can influence, by attraction and repulsion, the poles of the heart. Besides this, with his good-nature, was it possible to laugh at feelings so ardent and so strong, which had induced a young woman to forget shame so far as to come and implore a stranger's help? But how to assist her? Unfortunately, Antony was ignorant of the occult science: to refuse Selinova's request would be to drive her to despair. "Time," he thought, "will bring her a better cure; let us leave it to time. I will tell her that, for the completion of the necessary incantations, two, three, new moons are requisite, according to circumstances: that I must have a personal intercourse with Khabár—with the Greek."

And he acted accordingly. Only in addition to his advice, he took her white hand, placed her on a seat, consoled her, and promised her all kinds of aid: and the pretty widow, whether tranquillized by his assurances, or feeling a new sentiment towards the handsome stranger, or by the desire of taking revenge on her former lover, departed from the physician, feeling almost consoled. The old song is right—

"O, a young widow weepeth as the dew doth fall;
Uprisheth the beaming sun, the dew drieth up."

The proverb—"it never rains, but it pours,"—was exemplified on this occasion: never had the physician prescribed to a patient so nauseous a draught as Bartholomew made him swallow at each of his visits. On the following day, again a reception—again the appearance of the inevitable translator. With him came the boyárin Mamón. The union of these two personages boded no good; but the printer had been pretty well frightened by the leech: was he come again to demand some absurdity?

Was it really so? "The pitcher goeth oft to the well, and is broken at last." It was not money nor pleasures that the Interpreter sought in his meditation. No—his passion was to obtain the good-will of others; in any manner, with any person—even against his own interest. He was ready to lie for another, for himself, so that he could in any way curry favour. That he had himself known Antony in Germany an old man, withered, white-haired—that Antony was a most mighty necromancer—could make old men young—could enchant cold and faithless hearts—could bewitch wood, iron, houses, whole towns; these reports were all fictions of Bartholomew's. O, when it came to inventing, he was no fool! Believe or not, that was no affair of his! But that he was believed, was proved by all the patients that he had brought to the young physician. A new proof of this was the boyárin Mamón: himself the son of a witch, burned by the Prince of Mojaisk for intercourse with the Evil One, he had already been terrified by the leech's proposal to transfuse his blood in exchange for that of the little deacon; and the boyárin had now recourse to the magic of the heretic. It may be guessed that what he needed was power to work death and mischief; and it was indeed no trifle. He came to request him, in the first place, to drive Anastasia mad with love for his son; in the second, to enchant a steel, so that it might not betray himself or that unhappy son, in the event of a judicial combat.

"What would the baron?" enquired Antony. Mamón was no coward, but he was awestruck when it was necessary to have recourse to supernatural aid. Trembling, he pointed to the Interpreter.

"The baron," continued the Interpreter, remembering the intractable character of the leech, and anxious to get safe and sound out of the adventure, which his passion for making himself useful had made him undertake—"the baron . . . as you see . . . hath a swelling in his liver" . . .

"I see nothing," interrupted the physician.

"As you know, I meant to say. Then at times he hath a whirling in the head, and sinkings of the heart; and then again, something after the manner of a consumption; and again at times, something after the manner of an hydropsy; at times" . . .

"At times death, too, I suppose. Either all these diseases exist only in the baron's imagination, or you, good Master Interpreter—be not offended—are pleased to lie. As far as I can judge from the patient's eyes and complexion, both tinged with a saffron hue, he hath simply an overflow of bile; and therefore I counsel him chiefly to give way less frequently to fits of cholera; and, in addition to this, to use (so and so)" . . .

Here Antony advised him to take an infusion of various herbs exceedingly common, and such as might probably be found in the neighbourhood of Moscow.

Bartholomew communicated all this to Mamon in the following fashion: "Thou must procure, boyárin, at the new moon, two young toads of different sexes; keep them together where thou judgest fit, three days and three nights, by day in the beams of the sun, by night under the rays of the moon; then bury them alive together at midnight, at the full of the moon, in the forest, in an ant-hill; and on the next night take out of the male toad a hook which he hath under his heart, but the toad of the female sex leave in the ant-hill. With this hook let your son catch the maiden, calling her by her name" . . .

The physician shook his head, and said—"Thou art a cheat!"

"A cheat, a cheat!" cried somebody from behind the door; and the poor Interpreter, surrounded on every side by a sudden attack, trembling like a leaf, neither dead nor alive, stopped short at the magic cry. He had not strength to move his tongue, he dared not even turn round.

The door flew open, and the chill of death seemed to breathe from it on the culprit. The detector stood outside, and had consequently heard all. He appeared, armed with the flaming sword of proof. It was Andriousha. There was no escape. Bartholomew looked at his judge . . . In that glance were united abject fear, entreaty, hope, apprehension, torture; the glance was so eloquent, that Andriousha was moved to save the unhappy culprit; but remembering that the cheater had made a tool of his friend, and that now he could put an end, once for all, to the translator's rogueries, he abandoned him as a sacrifice to his angry dupes.

"If Master Court Interpreter," cried the son of Aristotle, "translates as correctly as that the German papers and treaties between our great lord and the ambassadors, we may congratulate Russia on some rare strokes of policy. On thy knees, this instant—this moment, Master Bartholomew!—and beg for pardon. Thou wilt be lucky if the leech and the boyárin only drag thee out by the ears, on condition that thou never again show thy face before them!"

Obedying the boy's angry look and command, the unfortunate printer fell on his knees, folding

his hands pitifully on his breast, and bending his eyes on the ground. He had not a word to say for himself.

Andriousha explained to his friend and the boyárin, how he had followed the Interpreter (whom he had long counted a liar,) and had listened to his translation. He then gave the true version. Detected in this cheat, the Interpreter confessed to the villainous reports respecting Antony which he had so busily circulated through Moscow. Mamon was about to fly at him, and would have fairly throttled him; but Ehrenstein protected the poor devil, begging the boyárin to content himself with the punishment already inflicted of terror and humiliation. On this occasion, the new and eloquent little translator explained to the boyárin how much the inhabitants of Moscow were mistaken in considering the physician a sorcerer: that science had only given him the knowledge of natural powers, and of the mode of employing them for the benefit of humanity: that even if there existed in the world other powers to attract or to repel, by means of which a man acquainted with their secret influences might perform things apparently supernatural, yet that he—Antony the leech—was unhappily ignorant of those powers, and was himself but a seeker after them; and therefore that he must refuse every person who should ask his aid in such matters. But as a physician, he hoped by the help of God, and of science, which is also God's gift, to cure the sick; and he was ready, without any distinction of time or weather, without any views of interest, to be useful to any one who had the least need of his assistance.

Thus finished another unsuccessful consultation.

"It seems that I am fated to burn bricks here too," said the physician, sadly to his little friend, when the boyárin, followed by the printer, had departed.

"Raise the sick from his bed!" thought Mamon, with a sneer; "what old woman's songs would this potecarier sing us! . . . The man who is fated to live will rise through the ice-hole—from under a falling house can he leap, and arise from the grave. Him who is fated to die, even the staff of Iván Vassilievitch cannot raise. Let him get a beard, and then he may make acquaintance with the Fiend. The Devil would carry a hundred such Alnayne quacksalvers at his belt: better go to the witch, or to the Jew with the book of Adam!"

Nevertheless the boyárin, though he laughed at the leech's ignorance of sorcery, determined to keep silence on this point. "Let him have the reputation of being an enchanter, one who is acquainted with the secrets of the foul fiend!" said the boyárin to himself, as he descended the stairs—"I, too, will exert myself to spread the report: the more terrible we can make the power of the German, the more bitter will he be to my good friend!"

"Ho, Insatiate!" he said, looking at a tall peasant, as pale as a corpse, who was standing on the steps—"What dost thou here?"

"I would see Antony the leech—assuredly to be healed."

"Go to him, go! His devil is stronger than thine, than the one that is in thee. He will speedily fight him, and drive him away."

The boyárin had hardly time to pronounce these words, when the voice of Andriousha, calling the sick man, was heard above in the hall.

He was nicknamed Insatiate, from the nature of

his disease. He ate much—incredibly much—sometimes enough to make a meal for four healthy men; and yet he was always hungry. His countenance expressed deep-seated disease; yet the eyes had a kind of supernatural double brilliancy and liveliness, as if, by some mistake of nature, two beings were looking through them, enclosed in a single body. This double expression of the eyes struck the physician. The following was the account, which, in answer to the leech's questions, Insatiate gave of his disorder:

"He was a driver. Once, in the night-time, he had chanced to stop with his vehicle at a village inn, where there arrived, almost at the same time with him, a merchant with two horses from a distant country. Apparently this merchant was very fond of his steeds; for while he himself ate as sparingly as a monk in the first ages of Christianity, he gave abundance of oats to his 'flesh and blood,' as he called them, and expressed great delight that they fed so well. The merchant complained only of one thing; namely, that fate had not given him the means of feeding them on fine barley, giving them honey mixed with their water, keeping them in velvet meadows, of petting them, of never wearying them with work. Apparently he was rather simple, or a very good Christian, as he trusted in the honesty of his neighbour. These remarks, confirmed by the temptation of the Evil One, led the driver into a bad action. Hardly had the merchant found time to pour, with fatherly care, a good bellyful before his pets, and to enter the izba contented and easy about them, when the driver, following him to the door with his eyes, pilfered the oats from the stranger's horses, and gave them to his own. The food which he had bought for them at the last baiting-place would remain for another time. His horses almost burst themselves, while the merchant's steeds—his pets, his joy, the pride of his heart—could hardly catch a grain. The guests came out into the court, crossed themselves, and exchanged the usual Christian salutations; as they had arrived from different quarters, so they departed, each by his own road. From that moment the merchant had never been heard of. At first the driver laughed at him in his sleeve; but on and on he went, his mind growing gloomier and gloomier, till at last his soul was as dark as a wolf's throat. Already it began to be no laughing matter. From that day forward he grew ill at ease. One day he was on the road as usual. It was eventide. A stifling heat lay on the earth—it felt as when the evil spirit is throttling the sleeper who has no strength to escape. The sky seemed like a wall of red-hot iron. Afar, lights now darted along like serpents, and then again spun like a top. He was plodding on kneedeep in sand; hunchbacked, dwarfish fir-trees stood, like sentinels, along the road. When you think you have passed them, look beside you, and there they are, shaking their grizzled heads, and clawing at you with their hooked talons! 'Twas very eerie! The driver was alone: if he could but have spied a dwelling! Weariness and thirst were torturing him: his breast seemed on fire: his lips are parched up; but suddenly the lightning flashes on the stagnant surface of a marshy pool like a filthy sewer. The driver rushes to it: a thick rusty slime covers it with a greenish bloody mantle, which is cut in various directions by loathsome insects, darting quickly along it as if

they were skating; or by bursting bubbles, blown up by the inhabitants of its depths. It was horrible to look at this pool; what then would it be to drink from it? What was to be done? Thirst conquered abhorrence. The driver scooped up a hatful of the water; he blew on it to force aside the filthy scum—crossed himself—and, shutting his eyes, drank. At that instant—he knew not how; he could give no account of it—he remembered the merchant and his horses. Something began to lie heavy at his heart: in three days he felt as if a stone was pressing on his breast beneath the brisquet; and this stone seemed to be alive, to move, and suck at his heart."

"Ah, I understand!" cried Antony with delight, like a person who has just guessed a difficult riddle, over which he has been beating his brains. "But go on."

The driver continued, breathing heavily from time to time, like a labourer who has been lifting a great weight. Pressing close up to the physician, Andriousha listened, and translated the story into Italian. Antony devoured every word with eagerness.

"From that hour," said Insatiate, "I have never had a moment's ease; and, above all, I can never satisfy my hunger, however much I eat. Even though I eat a loaf as large as a man's head, and a whole sheep, I am still hungry. I have been to the wise women—the wise women straightway guessed that I had stolen the oats from the stranger's horses, but they could do nothing for me. Wherever I went they always told me the same. What money have I not paid? What oats have I not given to strangers' horses? What work have I not done in monasteries? All was in vain. Every where they call me the Insatiate. This word hath become a jeer; the boys mock me with it, and throw stones at me. Thou see'st these five bones!" (he showed his gigantic fist.) "I could smash any one I pleased. But what good would that do?" (Insatiate shook his head;) "and I do not shake them off even. There is a stone in my bosom heavier than those they cast at me; there it seemeth to be planted! Hark, how it rumbles! Dost thou hear it? And then they call me Insatiate! Oh, it is heavy—so heavy! If I could but depart from the light of day! . . . Help me, good man! drive it out of me! I will be thy bond slave to my dying day; though they say that thou art an accursed Latiner, a German heretic—worse than a Tartar!"

And Insatiate, as he finished his story, wept—wept bitterly.

Having made the necessary medical examination, Antony said—"Yes, in thy body there is nested a living animal. With the help of God I will drive out of thee this horrible creature, and thou wilt be well. Pray to the most Holy Virgin; and when the Italian Aristotle shall build her temple, labour thou at the foundation of the altar."

Insatiate promised, and with lively confidence gave himself up to the leech's will. The cure was complete; the next day the patient got rid of a toad, which he had probably swallowed in an embryo state in the stagnant water. When completely recovered, he every where sang the praises of the leech Antony, and in his daily prayers remembered gratefully the German's name; imploring God to convert him to the true faith. The Russian people explained this cure after their own fashion.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ENCHANTMENT.

There flew the nightingale
 By the greenwood, by the green underwood,
 By the greenwood, by the birchen grove,
 Flew away the nightingale
 To a green gárdon, she knew not where;
 Then perched the nightingale
 Upon a branch, she knew not where,
 O that branch, how it allured her then!
 O that greenwood, how it charmed her then
 How she loved it, that nightingale,
 Singing, how she joyed in it!
 She never will depart from it.

WHAT was doing during this interval in the other half of the stone palace? It is time to cast a glance in that direction.

The sojourn of the heretic in Obrázetz's palace threw a gloom around it: it seemed as if the mark of an anathema had been fixed upon the house; and, therefore, all its inhabitants cursed and hated the foul German. Every day were spread fresh reports of his connexion with the Evil One, and of his wicked deeds. At one time they saw the devil flying to him down the chimney in the form of a shooting star, or troops of young witches rushing to meet him. At another, they enjoyed all fathers and mothers to conceal their children, particularly such as were handsome; they say he steals them, in order to become young and beautiful by drinking their blood. They informed one another in confidence that he had enchanted a sword for Mamon, in case of the judicial combat; that he had cast out an evil spirit in the shape of a toad, from Insatiate, and that he kept this imp in a bottle to let loose upon the first person who should offend him; that when passing by the churches, he dreads even to walk in their shadow. They not unfrequently observe that the deacon Kouritzin, the greatest of heretics, visited him at dead of night, when all good people were asleep, and passed the hours of darkness with him in devilish ceremonies; and that they had seen the Evil One fly out of the chimney in a wreath of smoke. Did one of the male or female slaves die in the house?—'Twas the heretic's fault. They were compelled to get *living fire*, (by rubbing two pieces of wood together.—Note, in the evening, when all the fires of the house were put out, and even that in the ovens was quenched with water;) they made a pile, and forced every domestic animal to jump over it, to purify it from the demon-influence. All the inhabitants of the Stone Palace (that is to say on the boyarin's side) approached this sacred fire to light their candles at it. The fresh *living fire* was distributed about the house, and lighted it up afresh. It was lucky if the *Master's* heart was even now satisfied by these purifying rites. From this time, the four-footed animals enjoyed the desired health; from this time, too, the inhabitants of the palace began to *sleep up for the night*, that the guardian angels might have free liberty in the hours of sleep to wander round the slumberers; without running the danger of stumbling against any thing, and being thereby offended.

Obrázetz could find no means of getting rid of his terrible guest, and no way of releasing himself from his heretical bondage. Beg Ivan Vassilievetch to loose his chains—he dared not: Antony the leech was rising higher day by day in the Great Prince's favour. In his affliction the boyarin frequently compared himself with the much-suffering Job; all whose sorrows, he thought, he would willingly have accepted in exchange for this state of imprisonment.

The half-christened lad, Antony's servant, was much attached to him. "Birds of a feather flock together," said the people of the boyarin's side; and they never permitted the youth, under any pretext, to appear in that quarter. Even Andriousha, since he became intimate with the heretic, was not received by Obrázetz so affectionately as before; and he was obliged, whenever he approached the boyarin, to purify himself by washing. Anastasia, however, loved her godson as much as ever, and found even more than her former delight in conversing with him—About what?—can you guess?—about the heretic.

About the heretic! . . . Is it possible?

Now you must know, good people, Anastasia was bewitched.

The sorcerer had bewitched her from the first moment she beheld him: of this Anastasia was firmly convinced. How otherwise explain what she felt towards the German?—him who was linked with the fiends? To whom had they told so much ill about the heretic as to her? What? after all the charms against the Evil Eye that her nurse had mumbled over her: after all the sprinkling of holy water with Thursday's salt* infused in it, and coals; after the cares of the whole swarm of her tierwomen; after all the advice of her father, of the whole household—and of her own sense swayed by common prejudices; the foul German, the Latiner, the necromancer, hardly reached the staircase, ere Anastasia had managed to send away her nurse, her guardian maidens; prejudice, fear, shame—and there she was at the sliding window!

It is to be remarked, that the sliding window is a characteristic peculiar to the Russian people: even in our own times, compel a Russian merchant or peasant to make double casements for the winter; he will perhaps make them, but he will nevertheless always leave one window free—that can be opened or shut as he pleases with a sliding door. Without this window, his house feels to him like a prison—close, stifling, and gloomy: he would, rather than have no free opening, knock out a pane of glass: what cares he, the iron child of the north, for the frost! Surrounded with snow, in the bitterest cold, he opens his beloved little window, and through it admires God's light, the midnight sky, strewn with angel eyes. He looks out at the passengers going and coming, listens to their gossiping talk, hearkens with a kind of delighted sympathy to the rustling sound of the belated traveller's step upon the snowy road, to the distant tinkle of the sledge-bell dying faintly along the wintry desert—sounds which have a pensive attraction for the Russian heart.

In Anastasia's solitude, the sliding window which had replaced one of the Italian casements of her bower, had afforded her also much amusement: it was destined to have a powerful influence on her fate, from the hour when she first beheld from it the young and handsome foreigner. In spite of herself she was attracted to that window; in spite of herself she gazed through its modest solitary little pane, or had even ventured to slide it back, but in such a manner as

* Thursday's Salt—On Thursday in Easter week salt is burned or roasted with an egg: and a quantity is preserved in every house. This salt is supposed to possess great medicinal and anti-magical properties; and is given to the sick cattle, &c., &c., on various occasions. A portion is always eaten with the first food taken after the fasts, in order that this food may not hurt the stomach, &c.—T. B. S.

she could not be seen. The little pane was always bright and clean; but when the fierce frost breathed upon it, what would she not do to get rid of its snowy dimness!

There he was—the sorcerer—the handsome stranger! How the fire of his blue eyes seemed to devour the distance! How his fair face seemed to rival the snow, when the first ray of morning streams upon it! What a well-knit, active form—what a noble walk! How well his rich dress became him! He seemed himself to have all the luxurious softness of the velvet. Anastasia's heart beat violently, as if it had been struggling to burst from her bosom and fly towards him—it ultimately sank and fluttered. She admires him, she watches him to the gate like a faithful slave who watches his master as he departs—she devours his footsteps. There is the clink of the latch—he is gone . . . Her heart dies away, as though he were plunged into eternity. She is sad, very sad; she is weary of the light of day; but the enchanter returns . . . and Anastasia awaits him, minutes, hours, even a whole day. The poor girl cannot eat, or if she forces herself to swallow anything, 'tis only to conceal from the household her sickness of the heart. Yes, she is ill; she is bewitched.

Frequently she questions herself as to the cause of her sorrow; she demands from her heart an account why it loves a stranger, a heretic, whom all good people shun, and her sire curses; whose religion was banned by the fathers of the church. "Enchantment!" cried her conclusions; "there neither is nor can be any other cause." Often she turns to the Mother of God—with burning tears she implores her to save her from the snares of the tempter. For two or three minutes she is more easy; but again the image of the handsome foreigner lives before her sight, sits by her side, and holds her hand in his. If she shuts her eyes, the very same unearthly being which she saw in the visions of childhood, the very same, only with the glance, the smile of the German, is lying at her feet, folding its white pinions. She awakes, and anguish, like a venomous sting, is buried deep in her heart. Sometimes she hears enchanting sounds, (Antony was playing on the lute;) there is the celestial voice; there are the self-sounding dulcimers that in the visions of her childhood had rung so sweetly through her heart.

Occasionally Andriousha comes from the physician to his godmother: her conversation was upon one subject alone—about the enchanter. Andriousha relates with warmth how good his friend is, how affectionate, how feeling; he endeavours by every kind of tender caresses, to prove to her the injustice of the evil reports about the leech; he swears by all that is holiest in the world, that Antony is not a witch, nor Tartar heretic, but a Christian like themselves, only not of the Russian faith. Anastasia longed to believe, but dared not, dared not—could not. He no magician! Why then did she love him, when he had never spoken a syllable to her; when he had never beheld her—not even once? How could he be a Christian, and not of the Russian faith? and not wear a cross on his breast? The poor maiden could neither guess nor understand. Only when Andriousha prepares to return to the physician, Anastasia gives her godson a sweet farewell kiss, and involuntarily, with her satin-soft hand, signs him with the cross. Did she not wish to send both the caress and the

holy sign to the stranger? And all her thoughts were on the handsome foreigner, and at all times, in all places, he—he alone—was with her.

It was decided that she was sick—that she was bewitched.

But the young physician, entirely devoted to science, had forgotten that there existed such a person in the world as Anastasia.

Thus passed several weeks.

The Feast of the Annunciation arrived: throughout the city on every side arose the sound of bells; almost all the human beings in the boyarín's quarter had crowded to the house of God. There remained at home only Anastasia, her faithful nurse, a few of her women, and several other servants. The nurse, the maidens, the servants, every one in his or her own corner, had lighted their tapers and were saying their prayers: Anastasia had finished her devotions, and was seated by the fatal window. A kind of holy stillness brooded over the whole house; no knocking was heard at the door, the latch tinkled not at the gate, no causeless word broke the deep silence. To disturb it would have seemed sacrilege. On Antony's side there was the same calm and stillness: he was sitting pensively at the window. Was he thinking of the prayers of his fellow-Christians in the cathedrals of his second fatherland, Italy, the friendly pressure of his learned preceptor's hand, the enchanting smile and burning glances of the maidens, or the caresses and blessings of his mother? Did he not feel his rude exile from the domestic life of Moscow—his loneliness?

All was quiet in the house as in a desert. At length he heard over-head footsteps . . . the steps of a virgin, and of one, as he had been assured, most lovely, benevolent, and good. How many attractions swarm around her! She is, like him—alone. 'Tis as though they were alone in the house—alone on earth. Did they not understand each other? Did not their souls unite through the frail partition that divided them? Who could tell? . . . He had often told Andriousha that between them two and Anastasia there existed a magic, threefold bond. Why had he destroyed this bond by his indifference? Why was not Andriousha with him, to talk about the lovely Anastasia, to let him take from him her kiss, her blessing—again to knit that threefold bond?

Again the bells rang out; the service in some of the churches had concluded.

Andriousha appeared at his thought. This time he was announced by the chirping and fluttering of various kinds of birds. All out of breath, rosy with haste, he rushed into the chamber: in his hand he holds a triumphant trophy of the solemn festival, a huge cage with a multitude of feathered inhabitants. They were bulfinches, larks, and chaffinches—all harbingers of the bounteous spring. This was a present to Andriousha from the children of the Great Prince. Poor prisoners, how they beat against their dungeon walls!

"What meanest thou to do with them?" said Antony.

"The window . . . open the window!" cried the boy, with rapture. "Dost thou not know to-day is the Annunciation?"

Antony obeyed with pleasure his little friend's desire. The window was opened, and through it the fresh vernal air floated into the room. The sun threw into it sheaves of dazzling gold, as if rejoicing in the first festival of the year. Hun-

dreds of birds darted hither and thither through the air, or chirped and sang upon the trees, which were now putting forth their buds; others were perched on the roofs and walls. "Dost thou not hear how they keep holiday on their day of liberty, as if they, too, had glad tidings to tell?" said Andriousha: "To-day they free the winged prisoners; to-day, too, they set at liberty those who have been imprisoned for debt."

"What a beautiful custom!"* said the physician; "it reconcileth me to the Russians. Thy father speaketh true; beneath the coarse covering of their manners lie concealed many excellent qualities."

During this time Andriousha was opening the doors of the cage.

"Go ye, also," he cried, "and bear glad tidings!" and the prisoners, one struggling before the other, hurried thronging from their confinement. Many of them instantly vanished out of sight; others, as if wondering at their unexpected liberty, perched hard by, pruning their wings and gazing around them. Only at the bottom of the cage, in a separate division, there remained one bird. Andriousha gazed at it some time with wistful indecision. "This one sang so sweetly all the winter in my room," he said, sorrowfully.

Antony replied not, but looked in his face as if interceding for the poor prisoner: the boy, with the swiftness of lightning understood him.

"True," he cried; "this little bard sang for me so long, that I ought to be the more ready to release him. But he must receive his freedom from my godmother; he is so pretty!"

And the boy disappeared with his precious bird.

In a few minutes Antony heard a casement open in the chamber over-head; he stretched himself as far as he could out of his own window, looked up . . . first, a small white hand waved in the air, then a little singing-bird darted away from it, and then there was drawn, as it were, against the sky, the face of a girl, (never in his life had he beheld any thing so lovely), and then there fell upon his whole being the earnest enchanting gaze of a pair of dark eyes, and in a moment the fair vision . . . was gone. He felt as if his senses were departing; he seemed riveted to the spot; a dim mist darkened his eyes; when he returned to himself, Antony strove to reduce his thoughts to order. . . . What had he seen! Was it a being of earth, or a dweller of the heavens? . . . He remembered the wondrous outline of the face, and the soft glow that seemed dawning on it, and the languishing yet burning glance, and the long dark-brown hair which fell carelessly from the window, and the white fairy hand: all this was graven on his heart. We have already said that he had never yet known love for any woman—the stronger therefore was the feeling that now overwhelmed him so suddenly. It was at once the sensation of loneliness, of a life in a strange land, the thirst of a burning soul; a soul loving, yet hitherto veiled with a covering of cold reserve, by circumstances—a thirst to unite with a soul that could understand him—to communicate his elevated hopes, even though they were destined to be deceived—his aspirations towards all that was noble—to share all this with a liv-

ing being. The fountain had been concealed for ages beneath a ponderous rock; the rock was struck by the thunderbolt, and the fount burst forth like living silver. Stop its flowing if ye can! This was love, such as is felt for the first and last time by strong and extraordinary minds. "Perhaps, too, it was the love of romance," you say—you may add, 'twas the love of the fifteenth century; a century marked with the distinctive stamp of the marvellous, and which had not yet thrown off its iron panoply, tempered in the fire of chivalry.

From this time Anastasia was no longer to Antony a mere creature of the imagination—that name was no longer a union of empty sounds, a mere word. In her was joined all earthly and heavenly loveliness, purity, goodness, intellect, strength of soul. In her person he glorified nature, humanity, God himself. She was his tie to Russia; his ark of life and death. From this time his solitude was peopled; it was inhabited by Anastasia. His love was uncalculating, unreasoning; it was wholly in its source—the heart. Reason had no part in it; it was pure, as the cloudless heaven. No dark thought or intention troubled this sentiment; he desired nothing but to behold Anastasia—but to look upon her. The fear, however, of wounding her, of drawing suspicion upon her, quenched this desire within him. He never again ventured to open the window beneath her chamber: it might be remarked by her father, her brother, the neighbours; they might think some evil of the maiden. But he often listened—did not the window tinkle over head? No; all was still.

On entering or quitting the house he never again saw Anastasia; but once, on returning home, he found on the steps a branch which had been thrown from above; a parrot's feather, which had been presented by Sophia Phomishna to the Great Prince's little favourite, and had passed from Andrea to the boyarin's daughter; and once he found a riband from her hair. He knew from whence came these precious things; he understood their speechless language, and in his happiness he prized them higher than all the favours of Ivan Vassilievitch.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FUGITIVE.

AND Ivan Vassilievitch *did* show marked favour to the physician. At one time he would send him a gracious message; at another, a command to *behold* his *royal eyes*, or a dish from his table, or a piece of German cloth for clothes. He frequently had conversations with him. Antony began to express himself tolerably well in Russian: he, however, still employed an interpreter; generally Andriousha or Aristotle, who delighted with all his soul in the advancement of his brother's pupil. These conversations were generally about the affairs of Italy, so well known to Ehrenstein. The Great Prince was particularly fond of hearing accounts how the Roman Empire, once so mighty, was withering away, divided into petty republics; and from these relations his strength of character enabled him to draw a lesson profitable to himself. Antony informed him in what order, at no very remote period, there had been established a post-office, first in France, and afterwards in the German states. Ivan Vassilievitch introduced into his

* This beautiful custom is still kept up in many parts of Russia. Small birds are sometimes served up alive, in picquet, so that "when the pie is opened the birds begin to sing," as the nursery rhyme hath it.—T. B. S.

own country posts and stations. Antony explained to him other new inventions in Europe, and the Great Prince prepared to profit by them on the first opportunity.

By such influence and meditation as that of Antony, the contemporary and powerful development of civilization in the West, found in the clear-sighted soul of Ivan an echo, rude indeed, uncalculating, hardly recognizing its own powers of the spirit of improvement that spoke through the daughter of Palæologos, the German and Russian ambassadors, the artists, the physicians, and travellers. In the West, dexterity exhibited in the cabinets of sovereigns; discussions carried on through accredited envoys; an active school and arena for subtle and crafty intellects, which had received the designation of "politics," or "diplomacy," had begun to take the place of armies. These arms were skillfully wielded by Ivan Vassilievitch also; the other nations and sovereigns were beginning to concentrate their power; the same thing was done by the Russian Great Prince when he united his provinces into one whole. There the idea of royal power enveloped itself in solemn and splendid ceremonies and forms, acting through them upon the feelings of the mass. The court precedence, kissing of hands, magnificent receptions of foreign ambassadors, banquets, ranks, heraldry, titles, give form to this idea even among us. In the West the system of regular warfare was established. Iván was also instituting regiments. I have already alluded to the introduction of posts. We have seen, too, how the spirit of intellectual inquisitiveness, which gave to the fifteenth century Wicliffe, Huss, and lastly, Luther, had been communicated to our Russia under the form of the Jewish heresy: in a word, the then life of Europe, though under coarser forms, has descended even to us. It is not my business to explain here why that life, after Iván III., did not receive among us a gradual development, and one which led to more important and specific results.

We have seen that Iván Vassilievitch was concentrating the power of his throne and of Russia. Tver separated him from the northern provinces: he determined, by fair means or foul, to annihilate this barrier, and to unite the heart of Russia with its northern members. Having previously secured confidential partisans in Tver, and having discovered, as we have seen in the first part of our romance, a pretext for declaring war against its prince, Iván Vassilievitch was assembling troops, in order to overthrow, by one effort, the power he had so long been undermining by artifice.

All the land of Russia began to be moved.

While the armament of Moscow was preparing for the campaign, another body of troops was ordered from Novgorod. The Russian, in the time of Iván Vassilievitch, had more than once tasted military glory. There were therefore, on the present occasion, a multitude of volunteers eager to seek it. The direction of the artillery was confided to Aristotle, who was torn away for this purpose from his great work. The artist once more had to transform himself into an engineer.

In order that this army might be committed to a worthy leader, they were awaiting at Moscow the celebrated voevoda, the Prince Daniel Dmitrii Kholskii, whom a sickness, real or pretended, had detained in his distant possessions. Pretended, I say, and no wonder, as he was a

Tveritchánin (native of Tver) by birth: a descendant of the princes of Tver, and must obviously have been unwilling to obey his sovereign's command in going against his native land.

The court physician also was commanded to *mount on horseback*. His duty attached him to the person of the Great Prince, who intended himself to accompany the army. Iván Vassilievitch, under the shield of his general, desired to earn for himself the title of "conqueror of Tver." It was with delight that Ehrenstein received this order, which would give him the means of in some measure distracting his thoughts from Anastasia, and offered him the hope of being serviceable to the cause of humanity. With these hopes also mingled his inborn spirit of chivalry, which was to be appeased neither by education nor by the modest pacific profession of the leech. Nature, in spite of himself, attracted him towards that destiny from which he had been torn by the vengeance of Fioraventi. These hopes were also cherished by Aristotle, who coveted for his brother's pupil new honours and new advantages.

After a day passed in the squares where the troops were mustering, Antony had lain down, but could not sleep; whether it was that he was agitated by the thoughts of Anastasia, whose form flitted before him like a fair enchanting vision, or of the expedition, which was represented by his ardent imagination, his noble heart, as an enchanting picture. Suddenly, in the midst of these reveries, which prevented him from sleeping, he heard strange cries in the street. They shouted—"Seize him! seize him! hither, here, this way! To Obrazetz's palace: we will answer for him with our heads!"

Antony opened the window towards the street: the night was so dark, that the city seemed buried in the bowels of the earth; objects were all fused into one black mass; he could just distinguish the movements of several figures, at one moment leaping over the railing or grate, at another vanishing into the gloom: he followed them rather by ear than by sight.

But look! something is moving close to the house . . . something scrambles up the wall, and, before him is a tall, an unusually tall figure, blocking up almost the whole window. It must have required superhuman strength and activity to climb up the wall to such a height: this thought, and the unexpectedness of the apparition, caused Antony, at the first moment of surprise, to start back in alarm. "Save me, in the name of God, save me!" said the unknown, in a low voice; and without waiting for an answer, he leaped into the room with such violence and suddenness, that he almost knocked the physician off his feet; and then cautiously closed the window.

Antony knew not what to think of this apparition—nor had he time. The tall figure stands before him as if mounted on stilts, feels him all over, seizes him by the hand, presses it, and pantingly exclaims, in a low voice—"Save me! . . . the constables are after me . . . they would put me in chains. My friend . . . but art thou he . . . or Iván Khábar?"

"No! but 'tis all the same . . . what wouldst thou?" replied the leech, guessing that the unhappy man, flying from pursuit, was seeking to conceal himself in the house of his friend Obrazetz. A friend of the voevoda, he thought, cannot be a bad man.

"No! . . . great Heaven! who art thou, then! . . . Ah, I understand . . . the German leech . . . I am lost!"

And, as he spoke, he took a step back, as though he were about to throw himself out of the window.

Antony held him back, and said, with extraordinary force and earnestness, in as good Russian as he could . . . "Yes, I am the leech; but I am a Christian too, as well as the Russians. Fear nothing. Trust in me in the name of the Mother of God."

"Well, in the name of the Mother of God. By thy voice I feel that thou art no traitor. Now I will tell thee: I am—the voevoda Prince Kholmiskii; perhaps thou hast heard of me?"

"Aristotle hath told me much of the famous conqueror of Novgorod."

"And that conqueror, at the command of the Great Prince, they are now chasing . . . they would chain him, they would throw him into a dungeon!"

"How so? They expect thee even now from thy possessions, to entrust to thee the army of Moscow, which is going against Tver."

"I arrived, with Iván Vassilievitch . . . Tver is my native land . . . I refused to go . . . But hark! They are knocking at the gate as if the fire bell were ringing. Save me from the fetters, from deep shame!"

"Oh, if it be so, I will save thee, even if I have to pay for it with my life! It is only across my dead body that they shall reach thee."

In reality, they were knocking at the gate till the very walls of the house trembled: they shouted—"Open the gate . . . In the name of the Lord Great Prince, open! . . . or we will beat it in!"

The knocks, shouting, and uproar, increased every moment.

All in the house were fast asleep—all were thrown into confusion, and started to their feet: the boyárin, his daughter, and the servants, doorkeepers, falconers, poultrymen, scenschals, cooks, grooms, firelighters, gardeners, tirewomen, &c.—all that composed the household of a boyárin in those days. The men rushed, panic-stricken, in all directions, as if the house were on fire; questioning one another about the cause of the disturbance, lighting tapers, and jostling each other. They heard the name of the Great Prince, and thought that he was perhaps come himself to seize their master, in consequence of some denunciation. The boyárin was alarmed, expecting something extraordinary, and had recourse in prayer to the heavenly Mediatrix; Anastasia was half dead with terror; her brother was not at home, he was passing a night of debauch somewhere.

In the meantime Antony was actively employed.

In his room stood a huge cupboard, in which he kept his drugs. Out with the boxes and bottles—in with the prisoner!

"Speak! canst thou breathe freely?"

"Quite freely."

The prisoner crouched down on his hams; but even thus there was not room for him. What was to be done! . . . "Down on thy knees! So, 'tis well. God be with thee!"

The doors are locked, the boxes and bottles under the bed.

In this miserable cupboard, then, which served a heretic to keep his drugs in, in humble attitude, was placed the grandson of Vsevolod An-

dreievitch of Tver—the far-famed leader, the hero of Shelón, the conqueror of Novgorod and Kazen, the brightest gem in Iván's crown, the glory and honour of Russia; the man who made a thousand warriors, the enemies of his country, fly before him; who, standing at the head of his troops before the terrible Akhmet, in that moment which decided the fate of Russia, would not listen to the commands of his stern sovereign to retreat—now so dreaded the wrath of Iván Vassilievitch, that he concealed himself in a German's cupboard.

At the name of the Great Prince they opened the gate. The boyárin Mamon was there with the party. He was to be found every where, where there was to be an execution of a cruel order; when his bad heart could find employment worthy of itself. Above all, he was every where to be found where he could find an opportunity to revenge himself on his enemies. At the head of the constables and the guards, he explained to Obrazétz's domestics, that, in obedience to the orders of Iván Vassilievitch, he had come to seize the Prince Daniel Dmitrievitch Kholmiskii; that they had traced him from his own house to the boyárin's palace, and that he could be concealed nowhere but there. One of the constables bore in his hand a chain with which to confine the fugitive. Mamon demanded, in the Great Prince's name, that they should permit him to make search throughout the whole house.

Could Obrazétz dare to oppose the dreaded awful name!—Obrazétz, who venerated that name after the old fashion, as commanded by his parents; who enshrined it in his heart like the commandment of God!

The constables and guards, in a crowd, led by the exulting Mamon, burst into the palace like enemies, snatched the tapers from the slaves' hands, thundering, shouting, clanking chains, penetrating every where, in the chambers, the anterooms, oratory, and audience-chamber, courts, gardens, and uninhabited buildings; peering about, clattering their swords, turning every thing upside down. Even as far as Anastasia's chamber penetrated the disorderly rout. But here they encountered a barrier—virgin modesty, protected by a father's and brother's love. Here, at the door of this chamber, Mamon's approach was awaited by old Obrazétz himself and by his son, who had hastened home at the first information of a trusty servant. Both were armed. They were surrounded by a few of their bravest followers with axes and clubs, who seemed ready, at the first look of their master, to send into the other world, unhesitatingly, whomsoever that look should point out. At sight of this living barrier Mamon's steps faltered: he stopped before it with his train.

"God see'th," said Obrazétz firmly, "that the Prince Kholmiskii neither is, nor can be, in my daughter's chamber. Make but one step in advance, Mamon, and (the old man trembled) thou wilt lead me into the sin of bloodshed."

"What, do we meet again, my brander!" said Mamon, with a hellish laugh.

The thick white brows of the voevoda began to knit; the flash of his contracting eye glared upon his foe, and seemed to pierce him through. With his gigantic knotty hand he convulsively clutched his blade, his breast heaved like a tempest billow, and giving utterance to a kind of inarticulate sound, sank again. The boyárin's rage was appeased by the thought that blood

would be spilt near his daughter's chamber. He saw the gesture of his son's arm, seized his hand, and prevented a fatal blow.

Mamon perceived this terrible by-play—he hastened to depart.

"We have not yet been to the leech's chamber," said he, preparing to descend the stairs.

"Go there, and to the devil, or to thy mother the witch; and if thou make not the more haste, beware lest thou leave thine accursed bones here!" cried Khabár-Simskii after him.

Mamon stopped, and contemptuously shaking his head, expressed his rage in a laugh, redhot from hell.

"Father, let me!"—cried Khabá, frantic with fury.

Obrazetz again stopped him, and said with energy—"Hold, my son! Where thou wilt; but not here, by thy sister's chamber."

"Dost thou hear?" was Simskii's question, full of the thirst of vengeance.

"Ay, we hear!" was the sullen reply of Mamon.

The knocking, the running through the house, the shouting, the steps over-head at Anastasia's chamber—all these had echoed deeply into the ears and heart of Ehrenstein, who was trembling from his ignorance of what was going on in the boyarin's family. He would have given much to have been there: over-head all grew still—the noise seemed to come in his direction. It approached nearer and nearer. They knock at the door of his hall—he strikes a light.

What a misfortune—what an agony! Traces of huge feet which had lately been through mud were marked on the floor, and led, like a path, straight to the cupboard.

What is to be done? . . . clothes, towels—every thing that comes to hand—down on the floor with them—the fatal traces are annihilated—God be thanked!

He turns towards the door—he listens. Something within the cupboard falls down with such violence that the doors tremble—then a death-rattle, then a sigh, and then the silence of the grave?

Antony's heart sank within him; his hair bristled up.

What if Kholmskii, overwhelmed by the thought of the Great Prince's anger, by the fear of imprisonment and execution, agonized with terror, exhausted by the rapidity of his flight, the exertions of climbing up the wall—by all that had come upon him at once, so terribly and unexpectedly; what if he had yielded up his life . . . perhaps he had been suffocated in the cupboard—perhaps a fit of apoplexy . . . it was horrible!

They would find the Prince Kholmskii dead in the leech's chamber . . . what would report say! . . . already he had the character of being a necromancer. They would call him a murderer: they would demand his head. The sovereigns, incensed by the concealment of the fugitive, would give him up to the people: Antony knew what sort of thing was an infuriate populace—the rage of a wild beast is nothing to its cruelty. He was willing to meet and battle with death by the bedside of the sufferer—he was ready to go even to an unmerited block; he was ready to go to the battle at the call of duty; but death, in the talons of a frantic mob—that was dreadful! And, what was still more horrible, he would be the unwilling cause of a fellow-creature's death . . .

To look into the cupboard, to make trial of medical remedies, was an impossibility: the knocking grew momentarily more violent. To delay opening the door would be to attract suspicion on himself, and render the search more strict. Who can tell! They may break open the door, and then they will find him face to face with the fugitive!

But Kholmskii perhaps was still alive!

Neither reason, nor strength of mind, nor muscles—nothing human could save him. Only God, God alone: all his trust is in him!

Agony is in his heart: yet Antony endeavours to compose his features as circumstances require. A stiletto under his arm, a lamp in his hand, and he opens the door of the hall.

Before him is Mamon and his rout.

"What would ye with me at this hour of night?" sternly asked Antony.

"Be not offended, Master Leech," replied Mamon, bowing courteously: "by the Great Prince's order, we are seeking an important fugitive. He hath fled hither to the boyarin's palace, and is hidden here. One of our people, methinks, said but now that he heard Kholmskii climb the wall—that thy window opened" . . .

"'Tis false!" interrupted Ehrenstein; "climb! his eyes must have been dazzled . . . I am no harbourer of runaways . . . What is the meaning of this insult? . . . Who said that? . . . I will complain to the Great Prince."

"'Twas not I," "nor I," "nor I," cried a number of voices, among which was that of the informer himself. They thought that they had been tricked by the evil spirit. They knew in what high favour the sovereign held the leech, and they dreaded the wrath of Ivan Vassilievitch, for unnecessarily disturbing his favourite's repose. They dreaded, too, the vengeance of the heretic sorcerer himself, who, they were more certain than ever, was a magician, from his having learned to express himself in Russian so soon—and as there was no longer any testimony of the fugitive having been seen at his window, Mamon, for reasons of his own, did not insist.

"However," said Antony, "not to leave you in suspicion, I ask, I demand, a search."

And Mamon, followed by two constables, glancing fearfully around them, and muttering a prayer, entered the leech's bed-chamber.

Every place was searched—on the bed—under the bed—in every corner. Mamon went up to the closed cupboard; and listened at it with a greedy ear. Ehrenstein collected all his courage and presence of mind, not to betray his agitation. Nay, he even smiled, though he felt as if his heart were beating like a hammer on an anvil.

Now, if the boyarin should require the door to be opened. . . . If Kholmskii be only in a swoon, and should come to himself just at the moment when Mamon is listening—if he should groan—or even sigh. . . .

Being in no condition to account for his movements, Antony steals his hand nearer and nearer his stiletto.

All is silent; no one moves.

"There is no one!" said Mamon, after a pause.

"There is no one!" repeated the constables, in a tremulous voice.

"Where can he have hidden himself!"

"Let us search round the house."

And the rout streamed confusedly out of the

leech's chamber, with divers strange remarks. One man had seen human bones pounded in a mortar; another, bottles full of blood; a third, a child's head (God knows what it was that fear had exhibited to him under this form); a fourth had heard the Evil One answer their voices out of a kind of box that hung upon the wall (probably from the lute). Poor devils! They were lucky to escape safe and sound.

God be praised—the searchers were gone! Antony listens—the latch of the gate clicks . . . the gate slams to . . . curses are heard on Obrazetz, on Kholmstkii. A minute or two more, and all again returned to profound stillness.

The door is locked, a sheet spread before the window . . . his trembling hand, feeling for the lock, with difficulty opens the cupboard.

Before Antony's eyes lay an old man of extraordinary stature, doubled up in a small space: he was on his knees; his head bent closely down, supported against the side planks of the cupboard. His face was not visible, but the leech guessed that the head belonged to an aged person, as the black of his hair was thickly mingled with threads of silver. Not the slightest motion could be perceived in him. With great toil Antony relieved the man or the corpse from his constrained attitude, and with still greater labour lifted him on his bed.

To the pulse!—God be thanked, it beats, though faintly, faintly, like a feeble echo of life from a distant world. This symptom restores to the physician his skill, his reason, his strength, all that had been on the point of leaving him. The remedies are instantly employed, and Kholmstkii opens his eyes. For a long time he could not understand his condition; where he was, what had happened to him. At length, aided by his returning powers and the explanations of the leech, he was able to give an account of his position. Touched by Antony's generous assistance so deeply as to forget that he was a heretic, he thanked him with tears in his eyes.

"The Lord will repay thy kindness," said he; "Ah! if thou wouldst but take our faith," added the voevoda, "I would give thee whichever of my daughters thou wouldst."

It was not till now that Antony could examine his exterior, which was powerfully moulded. The lines of his face were harsh, strongly marked, but at the same time expressive of grandeur and nobleness of soul! Though on what had wellnigh been his death-bed, and menaced by the axe of his powerful sovereign, ready that very moment to descend upon his head—though only just recovering from a first and unexpected blow—he seemed as calm as if, after a laborious day, he were reposing beneath a hospitable roof. The voevoda's life was saved; his liberty was secured—but for how long? Who could answer for that? It was necessary to find the means either of delivering him entirely from the persecutions of the Great Prince, or of concealing him from them for a time, until the ruler's wrath was overpast. Ehrenstein firmly resolved in his own mind to undertake the task of propitiating Ivan Vassilievitch, as well by his own personal influence as by that of the powerful Aristotle. In doing this, the greatest circumspection would be necessary. Obrazetz alone could hope to conceal for a short time so distinguished a fugitive. But how to convey Kholmstkii to the boyarin now, in the

night-time. Weakened by loss of blood, the voevoda was in no condition to walk without help, and even with assistance, there was no possibility of getting him over the enclosure which divided the boyarin's court-yard from the heretic's quarter. To conduct him round by the street and through the two gates, was not to be thought of. To knock at the door in order to obtain entrance to the boyarin was fraught with danger. Who could be sure of Mamont not having set a watch round the house? But time flies. The second cocks had proclaimed to the city that midnight was come: it would be impossible to defer the voevoda's removal till morning; for then the physician's servant would appear from the ground-floor, and visitors would present themselves. Nor was it to be thought of again to conceal the voevoda in the cupboard, and again to begin the frightful process, a repetition of which might cost one or the other of them his life.

It was, however, necessary to decide on something or other, and Antony determined to get over to the boyarin's side by any means he could think of: the expedition was not, at least, a distant one, however difficult it might be rendered by the barriers interposed between the two sides. Providing himself, therefore, with his trusty poniard, which he stuck into his girdle, he seized a shestopeor, a kind of mace armed at the end with a number of metal spikes; this was a present from Aristotle, and had been taken in the war against Novgorod. In addition to this, Kholmstkii gave him a signet-ring: a ring with his family crest, which served as a seal in the attestation of important acts: he carried it always on his finger. On the present occasion this ring was intended to assure Obrazetz that the physician was really an ambassador from his old friend and companion in arms. With these weapons for war and peace, Antony addressed himself to his expedition, not forgetting to lock his door on the distinguished stranger.

The first attempt he made was upon the fence, which, as we have said, divided the boyarin's court-yard from that of the heretic. Youth and determination will do wonders, and with their assistance he passed this barrier—that is, he clambered over it; not, however, without paying for his attempt by several slight bruises, and the loss of divers fragments of his dress. How his heart beat as he found himself entering the court of the boyarin for the first time, at midnight, like a thief—the dwelling of one who cherished toward him an unmerited abhorrence and hatred. The light of a lamp was trembling in an upper chamber: there lived Anastasia! How near was that treasure, yet how firmly locked from him! He had not, however, much time for these thoughts, for at that moment a huge dog flew at him—his bark ran far around. The combat was short as unequal—the stiletto in his side, a blow of the shestopeor on his skull, and the faithful guardian was silenced for ever. Antony was sorry for the poor hound, but there was no possibility of dispensing with this victim. Is it not even thus, too, in the world? Do we not often meet with generous but unfortunate people, who, while serving others to obtain their ends, themselves fall victims to those whom they aid?

On went Antony, and reached the great flight of steps. He cautiously rattled the latch of the iron door which led into the hall. No answer. He ventured to touch the door, and it opened. Antony was in the hall. Groping about him for

some moments, he hit upon another door; at this also he gives a gentle enquiring knock. Some one answers from within with a cough: the door opens, and—before him is an old man, hoary as a white-headed eagle. The taper held in his hand lights up a face which bears marks of painful anxiety; but as soon as he sees, having screened his eyes with his hand, who it is that stands before him, his face grows dark with terror. It was Obrazetz himself.

Full of disquietude about his friend and companion in arms, he had not been able to sleep; with the idea that the fugitive might yet appear to seek an asylum under his roof, he had commanded his domestics to go to sleep, (in his haste he had forgotten to order them to tie up the dog;) but had himself left open the wicket which led into the street, and unlocked the door of the hall. Then he had passed the time, now in praying to the Mother of God, known under the title of "Help in Extremity," (Our Lady of Peril,) now in opening the window to catch the slightest sound that arose through the stillness of the night, then again in coming down to the hall. He had heard the bark of the dog, the rustling of steps on the stone staircase, the knock at the iron door, and he was hastening to meet his friend.

And what! before him stood his terrible guest—was it indeed he, or was it a phantom in his form? What could he want with the boyárin at midnight, when even in the daytime he had never been in that part of the house! . . . Pale, trembling from head to foot, Obrazetz could hardly raise his arm and make signs of the cross; ejaculating aloud—"May God arise, and may his enemies be scattered!"

"Ay, may God arise, and may his enemies be scattered!" repeated the young man after him.

Let us again mention, that Ehrenstein even yet could not express himself well in Russian; but only so as to make himself understood.

"God is with us!" added he with energy; "and in proof of this, he hath, even now, vouchsafed me his peculiar favour. Thy friend, the Prince Kholmskii, is in my chamber. He came there by mistake. Dost thou not believe it? Lo! here is his signet-ring."

The boyárin crossed himself as he glanced at the token, and recognized it; but seeing blood on the German's hand, he cried with horror—"Great God! he is not wounded, killed!"

"Calm thyself, this is the blood of thy dog. To work, boyárin; the day is breaking. For the last time I ask thee: wilt thou conceal thy friend in thy house, or leave him with me, in danger?"

"Will I hide him? Assuredly," replied the boyárin, re-assembling his scattered thoughts: "go back instantly by the same path by which thou camest, and I, with my son" . . . (here he thought for a moment)—"my son will conduct the Prince through the iron door which leadeth from thy quarter to ours."

Not the slightest thanks, not even the merest expression of a good heart appreciating his noble action. To the stern soul of the boyárin it seemed that such gratitude would have overpaid a greater exploit; and besides, in performing it, Antony had broken through the rigid barrier which divided the orthodox from the heretic quarter.

The Prince Kholmskii, of whom report said that he slayed the prisoners taken in war, and slew with his own hands his own soldiers when he caught them pillaging, was sensible of the kindness that had been shown him. He refused

to take back his ring, and begged the leech to keep it as a memorial of his generous deed. The signet, as to the metal, was of no great value, and Antony could not refuse.

When Khabár opened the iron door, in order to admit the prince through it into the other quarter, he bowed gracefully to the German, and said a heartfelt—"I thank thee. If thou needest rescue, call but Khabár." From this moment he began to cherish a friendly feeling toward the leech. Was it to be wondered at? His generous heart echoed the voice of another heart as generous; besides, youth, open and confiding, easily throws off its prejudices, is less calculating than age. The latter is, as it were, ossified in its opinions; possessed of more experience, but at the same time is more prone to suspicion. Obrazetz would not consent, even then, to see his guest, though Kholmskii eagerly remonstrated against his refusal. To all the arguments of his friend, he answered only by silence. In his mind there were arrayed against the physician the strongest prejudices, cherished by his abhorrence of everything foreign—unorthodox—accursed—as he called it—by the holy fathers of the church, and held still more accursed by a heart stern and rendered implacable from the moment when his beloved son had fallen before the arm of a German.

From Anastasia they concealed Antony's generous deed, but she seemed almost instinctively to have guessed the truth; and the next day, when the magician left his chamber, she threw on him, from the window, a burning glance, which fitted before him like that on a former occasion, and, like that, left a deep impression on his heart. He ventured to bow to her; she nodded, and disappeared. From that moment, when they were sure that no one beheld them, their eyes began to carry on a dialogue, which received an eloquent meaning at one time from the blushes of Anastasia, like the dawning that heralds the tempest; at another from glances dim with love, and then, again, from the paleness which confessed that there was no longer a struggle between her reason and her heart. Antony guarded this treasure like some priceless diamond, which would be torn from him the moment he showed it to another; thus it was only when alone that he could enjoy it, triumph in it, and let his soul bask in its radiance.

In a few days Kholmskii's fate was decided. Obrazetz had recourse to the intercession of the Primate, and other powerful ecclesiastics. This mediation was certain to be successful, the rather that the Prince gave himself up voluntarily into the hands of his sovereign. The intercessors prayed the Great Prince to pardon the voevoda, who had always been a faithful servant to Ivan Vassilievitch; had brought to him and all the Christian nation nothing but honour and advantage, and was ready even now to go any where, whithersoever his Lord, and the Lord of All Russia, should command, excepting only against Tver. "Great sin would fall upon thy head, dear Lord, and son of ours," said one ecclesiastic, "if the voevoda should spill the blood of his countrymen." On their side, Aristotle and the court physician skillfully explained to the Tsar, that the report of his unmerited severity towards the illustrious voevoda, might injure him in the good opinion entertained of him by the Roman Cæsar and other potentates; that by rigour to the voevoda, the Great Prince would give his other subjects an inducement to become traitors to their country; that Kholmskii ought

not to be punished, but rather rewarded, for his generous refusal, and that this reward would stimulate others to imitate so noble a patriotism. Above all, Aristotle proved to him how easily, without the assistance of the voevoda, he might reduce Tver to submission; and how glorious it would be for Ivan Vassilievitch, without exposing himself to danger, to complete, in person, a conquest so skillfully prepared by his wise and dexterous policy. "Let the glory of this great exploit belong to thee alone," added Aristotle.

Ivan was not a great warrior. When it became a question of actual hostilities, he preferred to keep out of the way—he was pleased with laurels gathered by the hands of others; but no one can refuse him credit for skill in the difficult art of preparing for war, selecting the most favourable moment for it, and obtaining from it the greatest advantage: and these qualities are, at least, as rare and as precious as personal courage, and as worthy of respect as the fame of a distinguished general. On the present occasion, Ivan, relying on the powerful aid of his partisans, who had promised to open the gates of the city the moment he appeared before it, confided in the strength and valour of the troops of Moscow, and in the skill of his engineer, who was so dexterous in the management of cannon. He was assured that he would not risk his safety in the reduction of the principality of Tver. In this confidence he proclaimed, that as soon as the floods subsided, he would, in person, accompanied by his son, lead his troops against the rebellious Prince, who had insulted the sanctity of treaties and the ties of kindred. At the same time he pardoned Kholmiskii. This act of mercy, however, was not unaccompanied by conditions advantageous to himself: knowing how necessary the voevoda would be to him in future, and fearing that, at the first disagreement, he might take it into his head to fly into Lithuania—where all the enemies and traitors to the Prince of Moscow found a refuge, in the same way as Moscow was the asylum of all rebels and traitors to Lithuania—he demanded a signed engagement for him. On the same day, eight similar engagements, or signed deeds, some under a penalty of two hundred and fifty roubles, some even higher, amounting in all to two thousand roubles, were given by the principal inhabitants of Moscow, chiefly the boyarins, promising to pay the Great Prince these sums, in the event of the voevoda flying or departing into a foreign country. With this valuation of the distinguished voevoda at two thousand roubles, Ivan Vassilievitch was content: besides this, the Prince Kholmiskii *kissed the cross*; that "*evil against his lord he would desire none*." And his suzerain, the Great Prince, "had mercy upon his servant, and forgave him his unboxuneness."

This affair was henceforward buried in complete oblivion. In the course of time the Great Prince gave his daughter in marriage to Kholmiskii's son. Thus, at this epoch, went hand in hand extraordinary severity, accompanied by chains and death; and extraordinary favour, conducting the lately-doomed culprit into the family of the Tsar.*

* Kholmiskii's son, in the reign of Vassilii Ivanovitch, was sent to Baylo-ozero, and died there in exile. His only crime was this very marriage with the daughter of Ivan III.—*Note of the Author.*

CHAPTER XVII.

THE LAST OF HIS RACE.

"If thy son be a sot, wealth helpeth him not."

Proverb.

—"Hark! a noise. Is it the Tsar?"

—"No, 'tis the fool."

POUSHKIN—Boris Godounoff.

WHAT a tremendous, what an impassable barrier was that which divided the family of Obrazetz from the stranger! But the brave and generous Khabar had once looked through that barrier; and now a second time knocked for admittance at the door and heart of Antony. The visit was in the evening: it was a time for stealth, you will say; and you will guess the truth. Khabar came, unperceived by the domestics, (God help him, if his father should hear of it!) to consult the leech about a sick person. He was now sure—convinced—that Antony could perform wonders; this he had been told by the beautiful woman to whom he was conducting him. At any time the leech would have hastened at the call of a sufferer, and yet more willingly at Moscow; where as yet, with the exception of the parrot and Insatiate, he had not had a single patient under his hands, and where he wished so eagerly to acquire by his skill the Russian's confidence and love. And now, above all, with what delight would he not fly to the aid of a sick fellow-creature, when it is Anastasia's brother that calls him! Anastasia's brother! how much music in those words! On his face there was an expression that belonged to her: some family resemblance, some trait of her physiognomy—of that face which was painted on his soul; a trait not quite faithful, yet recalling the original. He came to Antony with a secret request, in all the confidence of friendship: who could have promised this two days ago? The young leech himself could hardly believe the visit, and in his delight knew not how to show enough consideration for his guest of the moment: or how he could prove to him that he was not that terrible German sorcerer that they had represented him in Moscow. One slight appeal to his benevolent heart, and he was ready to respond to this mark of confidence with any sacrifice: this he had very clearly shown by his aid of the Prince Kholmiskii. Having set out for Muscovy with so loving a soul, with such flattering dreams of living in a new country, he could not but feel, on his arrival, the full weight and bitterness of his solitude in a strange land, and the injustice of the people; and all of a sudden Heaven vouchsafes him the kind glance of a lovely maiden, the gratitude of a distinguished leader whose benefactor he had been permitted to become, and now sends him a friendly confidence.

Generous Antony! he had already forgotten all the ill-will and hatred of the Russians; and he was happy.

They go: over the sky are strewn myriads of stars streaming forth their twinkling rays; but these stars burn not for us—they have their own worlds which they warm and illumine. On this evening the lamp of our earth was not lighted; Antony followed his guide in darkness, not knowing whither he was leading him. All he knew was, that they had not quitted the city, and that they were traversing narrow winding streets; by their being every moment in danger of running against the corners of houses. They could scarcely distinguish objects; but suddenly

they found themselves surrounded on all sides by a multitude of bright lights, by the beams of which pious men and women seemed to be assembling for evening prayer, or for the guard of the Tsar's palace. The air was impregnated with fragrant incense; in reality, Antony and his guide were at the Great Prince's palace, which was encircled by churches and chapels, lighted up by religious zeal. Then again all was dark.

"Be cautious," said Khabár, in an almost inaudible whisper, taking the leech by the hand in order to lead him through a narrow passage between the houses; "caution, caution, Master Leech! here a word may bring danger on us!"

Soon the wind blew freshly upon them: this sign informed Antony that they had left the enclosure of the houses, and that they were ascending an eminence. By the stars, reflected in patches of water as in polished steel, and by the sound of mill-wheels, Antony concluded that he was on the hill above the pool of Neglinnaia; on which there still remained patches of belated ice. His memory was instantly recalled to the pugilistic battle on the pool; and thence, by the process of mental association, to the crimson veil which had been hung out from the tower. "That turret cannot be far off!" he thought.

His companion stopped him.

"Here!" said Khabár; and just as he was entering a wicket, he felt some one seize him firmly round the legs.

"I will not let thee!" exclaimed a stifled female voice, expressive of despair. "I will not let thee—thou shalt trample me to death first! When thou comest in, villain, thou shalt not find thy Greek alive."

Instead of answer nothing was heard but a violent blow.

"Kill me, but I will not let thee pass!" again cried the voice of despair.

"Scream louder, and I will kill thee!" said Khabár.

A light from a window illuminated imperfectly and for a moment a young and pretty woman, without kerchief or veil, (which were lying at a short distance from her on the ground,) and with her hair all dishevelled. She had twined her arms round Khabár's legs, and under a hail-storm of blows was kissing his knees, perhaps endeavouring, by gluing her lips to him, to stifle the screams of pain.

'Twas Selinova. She desired not to destroy her lover, but only to draw him away from her dangerous rival; and at what a moment! when the aid of a physician was indispensable to that rival. The moment for safety might pass, and the victory would be on her side. Terror, indignation, despair, were mingled in Khabár's countenance: for him, too, the decisive moment had arrived. It was necessary to triumph, cost what it might; or to destroy her for whose sake he had sacrificed Selinova—her who apparently was so dear to him. That beloved one—so far dearer than all, so precious—was dying, was awaiting his help, there—in the house—to which his entrance was barred by the frightful jealousy of a woman! He made an effort to drag Selinova from his legs, as you tear the ivy that for years has entwined its tendrils round a mighty oak; he threw her on his shoulders, and telling Antony to enter the house through the open wicket, bore off his spoil.

And the leech, under the burden of strange and painful impressions, entered the court and

ascended a flight of steps. The staircase was lighted with lamps, a rich oriental carpet was spread along it. Antony passed into a hall, and thence into an ante-chamber. There seemed to be an unusual bustle in the house: alarm was painted in the faces of all. In the confusion they hardly seemed to remark the physician. The servants were not Russian; in some unknown language they asked him what he wanted; he spoke to them in Russian—in German—'twas all the same: in Italian—they understood him. "Signor Antonio, the signor leech!" resounded through the house. With eagerness they conducted him to a small chamber, richly decorated in the oriental taste.

On a bed was stretched a young woman, whose beauty was triumphant even over disease. The dim eyes gave forth a phosphoric brightness; the lips were parched. Two long black tresses streamed over her snowy shoulders, and upon her heaving bosom, like two black serpents that have been crushed by a bold step. Above her, before an image of Greek painting, adorned with precious stones, burned a lamp made of an entire shell of nacre. At sight of a young and handsome physician, the patient, notwithstanding her sufferings, endeavoured to arrange her dress, and to banish from her countenance and attitude all that was disagreeable, produced by her torturing disorder. "If there is yet time, restore me to life, Signor Leech; I am so young, I would yet live on a little longer," she said in the Italian language, which sounded doubly sweet from her lips; and instantly she gave him her hand. Drawing him towards her, she added, in a whisper, at his ear—"They have given me poison: I feel it; but, for God's sake, speak of it to no one."

Beside the bed was a man of more than forty; bald, short, feeble, with crooked, goat-like legs. He was evidently the master of the house, as the attendants, who stood around distracted with sorrow, seemed to pay respect to him. His eyes were red and swollen with weeping: instead of being active and giving help, he wept and whined like an old woman. "Save her!" he implored the leech in a pitiful voice, and in bad Italian; "if I still had my empire, I would give it to save Haidée's life. Now I will reward thee in a manner befitting the Despot of the Morea."

Who would have guessed it? This man, stamped with imbecility physical and intellectual—this whiner was the last scion of the Emperors of Byzantium—Andreas Palæologos.

And this was all that was left of the greatness of the Roman empire!

His father, Thomas, brother of the last of the Constantines, with one son—this Andreas—and his daughter Sophia, Princess of Servia, had sought refuge from the victorious sword of the Ottomans, first at Corfu, and afterwards in Italy. The other son preferred to remain at Constantinople—as our countrymen the Russians said at the time, *eating the bread of the infidel emperor*—and found no reason to repent: he enjoyed existence, comfort, and tranquillity under the protection of the generous sultan. The exiled Thomas carried to Rome the head of the apostle Andrew, his right to the Byzantine throne, and his misfortunes: the precious relic was accepted by the Pontiff, who promised, aided by the Duke of Milan, to restore him to his lost crown. These promises were never fulfilled, and he died an exile at Durazzo, leaving for his monument

a few lines in the Italian chronicles, where he is recorded to have served in some magnificent ceremony or other, as a no less magnificent *uffiziale*. Desiring to find in the East an opponent to the infidel conqueror of the city of Constantine, and to draw Russia within the shadow of his tiara, the Pope, Paul II., betrothed the daughter of Thomas to the Russian Great Prince. Iván deceived the Roman Pontiff in his calculations. The arrival in Moscow of Andreas, whether from a simple desire of visiting his sister, or a foolish hope of flattering his brother-in-law with his right to Byzantium, but served to prove to him that those rights only are real which can be maintained by intellect, power, and money. Iván Vassilievitch was not the man to be dazzled by such tinsel: he immediately guessed the Greek's true value, and foreseeing that he would be a burden on him, treated him with no great distinction. The amity of the Sultan, though that of an accursed and unbelieving infidel, founded as it was on arms, had much greater attractions for his eye. To him the Pope, the Jew Khozi, Stephen of Moldavia, Batorii of Hungary, the Tartar Khan—were all equally attractive, when he had need of them.

We have said that Andreas Palæologos, immersed in tears, was standing by the bed-side of a beautiful and suffering woman: but we have not said who this woman was—poisoned by some wicked hand, which in all probability had been guided by the jealousy of a rival. She was his mistress; a year before she had been sold, against her will, by the avarice of her own mother. Fortunately for her, the poison was in itself feeble, or weakened by terror or conscience, and no time had been lost. The power of the remedies employed by Antony was victorious over the action of the venom. Haidee was saved. This lovely being, but a moment ago so near annihilation, bloomed once more like a bright and living rose. In her lip, her cheek, the fresh blood again began to course from its secret fountain. With both her hands—hands so exquisitely modelled—she seized that of the young physician, pressed it to her bosom, and raising to heaven her dark liquid eyes, which streamed with tears, thanked him more eloquently than with words.

At such an unusual expression of gratitude Antony was confused, and blushed deeply . . . Incoherently, almost unintelligibly, he expressed his delight at having restored life to so beautiful a being. Recollecting Anastasia's brother, he no longer wondered how the Greek was preferred to Selinova.

The Despot of the Morea, in the fulness of his delight, kept sneaking round the bed, like the learned cat at the end of its chain; and suddenly, at the first glance thrown on him in pity, began to mumble the little hand that was extended to him by Haidee, unwillingly, nay, almost contemptuously. "Now, come down to my companions, to my friends," he cried, snapping his fingers, and drawing Antony after him; "we will make festival or the recovery of our queen. If I could, I would make the whole world rejoice with us."

The physician unwillingly followed him, rewarded with a farewell look, a flattering glance, such as women, confident in their beauty, so well know how to give. They had hardly reached the threshold of the chamber, when the musical voice of Haidee sounded in the ear of Palæologos. He rushed to her on his tottering little legs.

"Dost thou hear; this is for him, for my preserver!" she cried in an imperious tone, giving Palæologos a gold chain of great price.

"That is a good girl!" he answered; "I meant . . . but I knew not what to give. . . . I was thinking about it. Now, one more farewell kiss on the little hand, or at least on the little finger."

"No, they are waiting for thee—begone!" said Haidee; and the Despot—despot only in name—hurried to perform the will of his mistress.

Antony thought of his poor mother, and accepted the royal present. He had already received a rich necklace from the Great Princess Sophia Phominishna for the cure of the parrot; sables and marten skins from the Great Prince—all was for her, his dear, his tenderly-loved mother. How exultingly she would deck herself in them, and show herself to her acquaintance! "All this my good Antony sent me!" she would say, with a mother's pride.

As soon as Haidee was sure that Palæologos was gone, she ordered all her women to leave her, and then called one of them back—"Thou gavest me just now some drink," she said, and shaking her head reproachfully, "what had I done to thee?"

The woman turned as pale as death; sobbing, she fell at her mistress's feet, and confessed all. Selinova had bribed her; the poison had been given, but terror or conscience had diminished the quantity.

"Let this remain between God and ourselves," said Haidee, giving her her hand; "pray to the Father of us all to pardon thee, as I do. Shall his sinful servant dare to judge another sinner? . . . But . . . they come; arise, lest they find thee in this attitude" . . .

And what had passed remained for ever a secret between these two women, the leech, and God.

Khabar appeared. The love and devotion of the servants—men and women—to their mistress, opened the doors to him at all hours of the day or night, removed for him the vigilance of the guards—these feelings were sentinels when he visited her in secret. His face was clouded. It instantly cleared up, however, at the first look that Haidee gave him. "Here! to my heart, my precious one—my treasure!" she cried, as she pressed the youth's dark curls to her bosom; "but for thee I had died—'twas thou who sent me a leech."

"Assuredly 'twas I; who else? I would go to the pit of hell—God forgive me—for thee, my darling, my little pearl!"

"Now wilt thou call the leech a cursed heretic—a witch?"

"O! I now am ready to call him brother. What—tell me, hide nothing from me—what ailed thee, my little dove? Was it not poison now?"

"Yes, 'twas poison . . . but from no hand but mine own . . . I myself, like a little fool, am alone to blame. I wished to save a silver ladle, and took a copper one. In the dark I observed not that it was covered with rust, and I ladled some drink with it. A little more, the leech said, and my eyes would have closed for ever. God knoweth I should not regret life; I should regret thee alone! Thou wouldst have wept awhile over my cold grave, and forgot the Greek girl Haidee."

"No! I would not have wearied mine eyes with tears: I would have covered them with yellow sand; I would have espoused another,

an eternal mistress; and made my marriage-bed on the coffin plank."

The tender and passionate Haidee kissed him with a southern kiss. Thus the parched earth, in scorching day, drinks eagerly the dew of heaven!

"Hush!" cried Khabár, raising his head like a steed at the sound of the war-trumpet. "There is a noise below. I will go."

"Let them feast! My poor king, as they call him, is now mad with drinking. But thou, my true king, my lord, grant a few moments to thy slave!"

"Fasting . . . and I not there! . . . I cannot . . . Farewell, my dove! The dark nights are ours."

"Thy pleasure is mine. Go."

And Khabár rushed from her embrace—from one banquet to another.

In the mean time the leech had been introduced into a motley society, which was impatiently awaiting Palæologos in a large long chamber. There were mingled Russians, Greeks, Italians, architects, and masons, workers in silver and copper, boyárin with the *vitch** and without the *vitch*, guards, the deacon Borodáti, the interpreter Bartholomew; there were also members of the higher and lower orders and ranks which Iván Vassilievitch had created and classed according to dignity: but now all were levelled in the bacchanalian orgie. Their impatience proceeded, not from any desire to enjoy the presence of the mighty despot of the Morea, and pretender to the Byzantine throne, but rather from their thirst for foreign wines, with which he usually regaled his guests. In his absence, the huge goblets, yawning on their sides, the silver-chased cups and flagons, with a melancholy thirsty air, and the ladies—that looked as if they had turned on their faces for very shame—were scattered pell-mell on an oaken table, now left alone and deserted, like some ruined spendthrift, who can no longer feast his friends with splendid banquets. By the number of capacious vessels heaped in picturesque disorder, by the abundant splashes of wine upon the table, the stupefied looks and red noses of the guests, it was very easy to see that Bacchus had not been asleep, and that his cupbearers had done their office with zealous activity. The benches had suffered most of all: they stood in a position, inducing one to think that the revellers had been making use of them to demonstrate extraordinary problems in military tactics: the covers of the forms were in one place pulled off and streaming down like a cascade, or an outspread wing; in another, unmercifully crumpled, they served as a pillow to a guest who was sleeping on the floor. Teniers would have found here an abundant harvest for his pencil. One of the guests, in spite of the fumes of the wine that were whirling in his brain, and remembering that he was in the house of the pretender to the Byzantine throne, was endeavouring with all his might to put the bridle of ceremony on lips, hands, feet—all that might forget itself in the dwelling of so illustrious a personage. Another was sneaking round the deserted table, and wistfully peering now into this, now into that empty flagon. A third was bestriding a bench as if it were a steed. There were some, too, so outrageous, as to lie down on the floor, and trumpet forth a snoring

concerto to the honour of the despot of the Morea. But the moment Andreas Palæologos arrived, all was awake and in motion—one of his own accord, as if by some magnetic sympathy, another by a jog from his neighbour—and instantly formed around their entertainer an inquisitive and varied group. Each spoke as well as he could, and in what language he was able, and each tried to anticipate the other in his eager enquiries; and the whole formed a gabbling enough to raise the dead. At last could be distinguished the words—"Can we congratulate you on the signora's recovery?"

"Lord Despot, how fareth it with thy dove, Haidá Andreevna?"

Here the Russian was anticipated by a foreigner.

But the Russian had shown no small cleverness in choosing his term: who could tell the name of Haidée's father! The Despot is her father, brother, friend—all, all. What could be better than Andreevna? Let any body try to invent a better title! You "can see with half an eye that he knows what he is about," as the prefect's wife would say in Gogol's novel.

"Saved—saved—she is saved!" cried the Despot of the Morea: "and here is her preserver," he added, pointing to Antony.

"What disease had the lady?"

"She ate something unwholesome," (here he clapped his hand on his stomach and made a wry face as if he had just swallowed something very sour;) "but now . . . all is over . . . all is well, my lads! Now for a carouse in Byzantine fashion—to the leech's health! Cupbearer, the best Italian wine."

At this exclamation the goblets were all in motion. Cups and flagons waved and clanked in the hands of the revellers.

The Russian guests crossed themselves.

"To the health of Antony the Almayne!" shouted a number of voices in Russian.

"Blessings be on him 'in the dew of heaven, and in the fatness of the earth!'" added the deacon Borodáti.

"To the health of our Antonio! he is ours by education, he is our countryman!" roared the Italians.

"It was our Greek that brought him hither! He hath saved the rose of our imperial garden—he is no stranger with us either," chorused the Greeks.

"We do foul sin, Matvéi Sidorovitch!" whispered a boyárin without the *vitch* to his comrade with the *vitch*; "the wine sticketh in my throat like glue. What! to the health of a foul heretic—a necromancer! . . . If he were at least an Italian" . . .

"'Twas even so with me, Simeon. My hand will not raise the goblet to my lips! I might as well try to lift, God knoweth what. But see! our neighbour here hath grown thoughtful too" . . .

The neighbour tremblingly pointed to his cup, which was full to the brim.

"Look there! see'st thou not something lolling out its tongue at us!"

And each man, seeing his own ugly face reflected in the wine, his staring hair, thought he beheld the devil with his horns.

"Have ye quaffed all out?" asked the Despot.

"All, all!" roared the guests; "without leaving a drop."

"Here is a proof . . . full proof . . . drunk

* All boyarins were not entitled to be addressed by the respectable termination *vitch* subjoined to their patronymic.

out" . . . repeated the boyárin with the *vitch* and his comrades, concealing their cups behind their outspread palms.

When it became Antony's turn to thank the company, by emptying in their honour an enormous measure, which would have laid him straightway under the table, as he was unaccustomed to the juice of the vine, he merely touched the goblet with his lips. His excuse was the obligation of his profession, which might call him to his duty at any hour of day or night, and the weak state of his health—"A leech is as a priest; both make a vow to serve God, in devoting themselves to the service of humanity. Each must present himself at the altar pure and undefiled.—If, by my presence, I disturb your pleasure, I am ready to depart."

"No, no! we desire it not. Thou art our most welcome guest!" cried Palæologos. "See how we carouse with our friends! Wine! haste! wine! more wine! . . . Or doth the Byzantine Emperor lack?" . . .

At this moment the interpreter Bartholoméw, swaying from side to side like a pendulum, reeled up to Antony's side—the leech saw him not—then he reeled to the other side—with no better success. At last he stopped close to him, and whispered at his ear till the young man could not help starting.

"Thou here!"

"Of course, most high worshipful sir . . . I informed you, methinks, that I am quite one of the family—quite at home. Him! said I well? What a glorious noble fellow is the heir of Constantine the Great!"

"In what, except gloriously draining the cups? In this too, methinks, his 'star is beginning to grow dim.'"

"Softly, softly, most worshipful: you kill one to say so . . . But did you see the pretty creature? What! did I lie?"

"For once you spoke the truth."

"If you . . . only give me a hint . . . I will take care . . . trust to me!"

And the interpreter, with an air of stupid cunning, winked his eye.

"Thou doest me too much honour. Add this garland to the hundreds that have been showered on you from the Rhine to the Moskva."

And Antony, leaving the interpreter sticking in the mud, hastened to the architects with whom he had travelled from Germany.

At the highest uproar of the revel, Khabar made his appearance. Having found out that many were ill-disposed towards the leech on account of his refusal to drink—"I will answer for him and for myself!" he cried; and before him they placed a measure, into which was poured twice the number of flagons that had been drunk by any one of the company in his absence.

"That is the way we bathe in wine—in Byzantine fashion!" cried Andreas Palæologos. His little legs were twisted across each other like wet threads; his lower jaw, which at all times projected, now hung down, so that his profile, with all its sharp angles indicative of silliness, was reflected on the wall in the most ludicrous manner.

"That is our way—in Russian fashion!" said Khabar, draining the gigantic measure.

Drink develops the real character more readily than any thing else. It is not at the bottom of a well, but at the bottom of a glass, that we should seek for truth. Audacity glittered in the eyes of Khabar; while the Despot of the Morea

showed the effects of wine by boasting. Both occupied the chief position on the scene of revel.

"What are we doing?" said Khabar; "we have drunk to the health of the Great Prince and our noble host; but we have not honoured his noble brother, Manuel Phomitch, who is keeping for him the city of the Constantines!"

Befogged as were the brains of Phomitch, he, nevertheless, at least comprehended the gibe, and proclaimed that his brother, in consequence of his flight to the Sultan, had been deprived of all right to the Byzantine throne. The toast was refused.

"O, my brethren, grievous is the burden of empire!" said the Despot mournfully; yet drawing himself up—"I myself have renounced it. To be sure, the empire of Byzantium is not like your principality of Moscow. How many seas and rivers doth it contain? How many great cities? Its smallest town is greater than Moscow. I will not say a horseman—even a bird could not in a whole year fly over our empire. But your little nook of a country—'tis a mere handful."

"Our land is also in the palm of God, and in the hand of our great lord Ivan Vassilievitch, and that hand reacheth far!" exclaimed proudly the deacon Borodatii, drawing himself up, and stroking his beard. Triumph and delight gleamed in the eyes of the tiny Titus Livius of the Great Prince.

"Thanks, thanks!" cried Khabar—"thou hast helped me out. Never didst thou speak so sweetly and so well. Let us kiss, and drink to the honour and glory of old Russia . . . Add, beside, that our holy mother Russia is growing up, not by years but by hours; while Byzantium hath been growing less, ever less and less, till she is all reduced to the great lord, Despot of Morea, Andrei Phomitch."

"And how would your Princeling of Moscow, my ungrateful brother-in-law—how would he have appeared in the world but for the children of Phoma?"

Khabar, with some of the guards, burst into a loud laugh. Around the scene of the dispute a circle began to form. Antony looked with pleasure upon this contest, in which were actors on one side, noble patriotism and loyalty; on the other, boasting weakness. Who but would have wished for the victory to fall to the former: who but would have answered for its doing so?

"Ay, it was but since my sister Sophia Phominishna appeared in Russia, that your nation hath been heard of in the world. The Tartars were driven away; Novgorod fell, and Moscow began to look something like a town. It is only since then that Ivan Vassilievitch came to be thought something of."

"Oh!" burst from the gallant breast of Khabar. He seemed as if he could have devoured the Byzantine boaster with his eyes.

A boyarin, with a thick white beard, appeared on the scene, and said, bowing low—"We honour and reverence thy mistress and ours, the Great Princess Sophia Phominishna; for that she loved Russia better than her native country, (if it is worth speaking of that miserable country, eaten up as it is by an unbelieving heretic instead of a Tartar locust;) but it is not noble in thee, Lord Despot of Morea, behind the back of our sovereign, Ivan Vassilievitch, to bar" . . . (the boyarin stopped and shook his head) . . . "nor would it be noble in me, in return for thy favours, my lord, to speak an evil word."

"Your sovereign, my ungrateful brother-in-law,

himself slighteth me—counteth me worse than a refuse marten skin. He gave my daughter to the Prince of Vereia; and now, for some woman's baubles, hath driven him to Lithuania. I thank him. What honour have I at the Great Prince's court? In what respect am I held? What gifts have I from him? I am worse off than the Tartar Tsarevitch, Danyár."

"The Tartar Tsarevitch's grandfather, father, and he himself, have done much Christian service," said the boyárin, again bowing: "let each be rewarded according to his service."

"And I . . . I . . . fools that ye are!"

The boyárin bowed still lower, and scratched his head.

"Know ye not that I carry in my pocket the Byzantine empire?"

"'Tis not over large," interrupted Khabár, "if it can find room in thy pocket. I could stow away half a dozen of thy empires in my pouch."

This reply was received with a general burst of laughter by the younger part of the Russians, and by many of the foreigners who understood the Russian language. Some one among them, as if by accident, jostled the Despot of the Morea; another, behind, made as if he was going to fillip him on his bald pate. The Greeks mournfully shook their heads. The boyárin, with the bushy white beard, preserved a cold haughty air.

"I would have . . . I offered this Iván of yours my Byzantine empire!"

"The crane to heaven is flying," sang Khabár.

"Interrupt me not, whelp!" screamed the pretender, stamping his little foot imperiously: "Know'st thou? One word to my sister, and thou art in chains!"

Khabár took fire, and arose in his whole majestic height from the bench on which he had hitherto been sitting before the Despot; he turned up the right sleeve of his kaftán, and, placing his left hand on his waist, twisted the thumb in his glittering girdle.

The pretender, delighted with his own courage, perhaps the first he ever exhibited, continued, swelling and heating himself more and more—"Iván did not honour me as it became him to honour me, an Emperor and his own brother-in-law; so I have given all his rights to my Byzantine empire to the Spanish king, Ferdinand, and Queen Isabella."

"Thou hast forgot, Lord Despot," said one of the Greeks respectfully, "that thou previously gavest these rights to the French king, Charles VIII.—that on that occasion he clothed himself in the purple of the Constantines, and triumphantly styled himself Augustus."

"Aye," contemptuously cried Andreas Palæologos, "he offended me; so I was wroth with him, and gave them to another. He is just such a felon as the Russian Iván" . . .

"Thou liest!" shouted Khabár, and instantly gave a slap on the face to the heir of Constantine the Great and Augustus.

"Well done!" cried Antony; "he who knoweth not how to make others respect him, is unworthy of respect."

And he threw the gold chain, the gift of the Despot, at the giver's feet. It was become a burden to the generous young man.

"Right well!" echoed some voices; "in the name of all Russia we thank thee, Iván Vassilievitch Khabár!"

"Oh, oh!" whined the Despot, holding his cheek: "Greeks, my Greeks! take my part . . .

Your sovereign hath been insulted . . . humiliation!"

All was an uproar. One man snatched up his cap and rushed out; another sneaked off without his bonnet. The vigorous buffet resounded in the ear of the feasters, and sobered many of them. A few of the domestics who composed the Despot's court, crowded up to seize Khabár; but stopped short, alarmed by his stern immovable attitude, or by the cries of the Russians, that they would not leave a stick of the house standing, if so much as a hand was laid upon their comrade. Perhaps the attendants obeyed Haidée's commands in sparing her lover. It finished by the Despot's going, in the hope of redress from the Great Princess, to complain to his mistress; and the hall, a few moments ago so gay and noisy, became empty and still. The last who quitted it were Khabár and his father's guest.

At the gate some one stopped Khabár. It was the Greek girl. She came not to reproach him, (how could her heart do that?) but to bid him farewell—perhaps for long—perhaps she was never to see him more. How will they report this adventure to Iván Vassilievitch; in what humour will it find the terrible ruler?

CHAPTER XVIII.

DECISION WITHOUT APPEAL.

By a covered passage leading from the Great Prince's palace to the Church of the Annunciation, which was constructed at this period of wood, Iván Vassilievitch was returning from morning prayer. When he left the church his face was cheerful, and bore the calm expression left on it by his recent devotions; but the further he advanced, the gloomier and more wrathful grew his brow, and the brighter gleamed displeasure in his glance. Behind him, plunged in mournful thought, walked a tall handsome youth; this was his son Iván.

They were followed by the boyárin Mamón. Neither of the latter dared to interrupt the gloomy silence of the Great Prince; Iván the Young endeavoured to hush even the sound of his footsteps, so as not to offend his father's ears, at a moment when the slightest imprudent movement might give a fatal direction to the explosion of his displeasure: he knew that that displeasure, if not exasperated by the compliance or the selfishness of those around him, might yet sink back to rest, or at least not lead to fatal consequences. And therefore he took care not to destroy this chance; like a skilful engineer, who gives free passage to the flood swelled by storms, lest it destroy his dam. On the boyárin's face was playing, now the delight of successful villany, and then terror; with eyes and ears he greedily followed every movement of his sovereign. Their silence resembled the stillness which prevails as the fatal lots are being drawn from the urn;—the lot was drawn. Iván Vassilievitch stopped in the middle of the passage, and turning to his son, said, "Hast thou heard, Iván, what thy favourite Khabár hath done?"

"I have heard, my lord," replied Iván the Young, calmly.

"'Tis naught, then, thou think'st, to strike the Despot of the Morea!"

"But wherefore! have they told thee that, father?"

"Neither why nor wherefore: he was assuredly drunk. It is thanks to thee that he hath worn his head to this day."

"If he wears that head from henceforward, it will be for thy good, my lord, and that of our faithful Russia," replied Iván the Young, with composure: "if he lay his head on the block for this matter, I would kiss that head."

"How so?"

The Great Prince looked sternly at Mamón; the latter struggled with all his might to hide his confusion, and meet his ruler's eye with calmness.

"Behold how the fact was," replied Iván the Young, with the countenance of truth. "Yesterday evening, at a feast in the palace of Andréi Phomitch, there were assembled, as if in insult, boyárins and rabble, old and young, to revel: when drunk, he made friends and fellows with all, drank to the health of a vile Greek harlot, and embraced a shoemaker who maketh her shoes. Thou knowest how he dishonoureth, by his debauches, his race, and bringeth shame on my mother, Sophia Phomínishna. In the full tide of drunkenness he began to speak evil of the Russian land, saying that it stands only through the Greeks, and that all its power and honour ariseth from the Greeks; that but for them, we should never have driven out the Tartars, nor taken Nóvgorod, nor built and extended Moscow: he barked, too, somewhat as if thou, my lord, did'st not feel his favour, and but scantily honoured him, and that therefore he had given his right to his Byzantine empire, not to thee, but to the Spanish king!"

"Ha, dog! What! when even his kennel is given him out of charity, and doth he give empires! One brother playeth the buffoon for the infidel Tsar, and licketh the trenchers in his kitchen; the other sneaketh about from corner to corner, and selleteth castles in the clouds to any one who is fool enough to buy them . . . Well, what followed?"

"I dare not speak how he bayed at thee."

"Speak! I command thee."

"He said, that he had not given thee Constantinople, because thou wert . . . I cannot, father; my tongue will not utter it!" . . .

"Iván, dost thou know me?"

This question would have produced an answer even from the dead.

"He called thee 'hound,' 'accursed dog,' and Khabár thereupon lent him a buffet."

"What! and he did not throttle him!" cried the Great Prince, unable to utter another word. His eyes gleamed fiercely, the breath seemed stifled in his bosom. Calming himself a little, he said—"And was it so in truth?"

"Ask the deacon Borodátii, the oldest and most trustworthy of the boyárins who were at the feast—ask the court leech, Antony."

Iván Vassilievitch grew thoughtful.

"No, it needs not. Thou say'st it, Iván; shall I ask boyárins and deacons?"

The Great Prince fondly loved his son, and was confident in his prudence and honesty.

"What hast thou been telling me?" he cried, turning to Mamón, and striking him with his staff a violent blow on the face.

Mamón felt that his life hung on a hair, and

replied with steadiness—"It is in thy power, my lord, to execute me; but I relate what I heard: I myself was not at the banquet."

"And that in future thou mayest more carefully inform thyself, thou shalt pay Simskoi-Khabár a hundred roubles for slandering him; thou shalt carry it thyself, and shalt bow thrice at his feet. Dost thou hear?" . . .

"Iván," he added, "give order, that from this day forth they call him in every act Khabár. It is profitable to the Russian Tsar to have such brave men. Thou dost well to favour him."

"And how came the leech Antony at the revel?" enquired the Great Prince of his son when Mamón had departed.

"Andréi Phomitch's Greek concubine had fallen sick. They called the leech in; and when he had relieved her, they brought him against his will to the feast. He refused to drink: they say the despot gave him a gold chain for curing the Greek, but when he spake evil of thee, the leech threw him back his gift: and the chain was a rich one."

'Twas evident by the sparkling of the Great Prince's eyes, that this news was agreeable to him. Nevertheless, he said—"Twas not wise, if the gaud was rich."

Thus was decided the fate of Khabár. An hour earlier, it would have been impossible to answer for his life. Mamón was certain of the success of his accusation, having the gravity of the offence in his favour, and the protection, too, of Sophia. Although the Great Princess did not love her brother, as well on account of the weakness of his character as of the profligacy so shamefully exhibited on this occasion, she nevertheless felt lively and heartfelt indignation at the unheard-of insult which had been offered to him. But Iván Vassilievitch had decided, and no ties on earth could alter his determination. Powerless against that decision, Sophia felt displeasure against Khabár, and from this moment began to cherish a feeling of enmity towards the physician. We must add, that between her and the wife of Iván the Young, there had arisen a kind of jealous rivalry; and therefore this success obtained by the young prince touched her to the quick. To her brother, after the Great Prince's decision, nothing remained but to quit Russia.

How happened it that Iván the Young played the intercessor? Boldness even here befriended Khabár. With the first dawn of morning he had presented himself to him, and related all that had occurred at the despot's banquet. He summoned, in confirmation of his words, the tiny deacon, the boyárin who had answered Andréi Phomitch, two of the guard, and the leech Antony. All confirmed the truth. We have seen that the noble, straightforward character of the heir to the Russian throne, enabled him to profit by the information of his favourite and the witnesses to whom he appealed, and to give a powerful protection to truth and to a noble exploit.

It was not without some agitation that Khabár and Antony the leech awaited, each in his own dwelling, the catastrophe of this adventure: the one, though he did not repent of what he had done, and would have repeated it had the same occasion presented itself, though ready fearlessly to submit to a capital punishment,

yet feared the shame which such a punishment would cast upon his aged father and his maiden sister. Antony was uneasy for him on the same grounds: he had begun to take a lively interest in him, he sympathized with the motives of his bold deed—coarse, it is true, yet at the same time attractive from the nobleness which originated it. He was inclined to excuse the very weaknesses of Khabár. In his desire to obtain the good-will of the Russians, Antony, at the feast of yesterday, had endeavoured to unite himself with their party, and was delighted that honour and justice were also on that side. With peculiar pleasure he heard that the boyárin's retainers, forgetting the title of heretic—a name so hateful to them—which had attached itself to him, loudly sang his praises for having thrown back the despot's guerdon. Who could tell but that, from this desire to obtain their regard, he might perhaps have embraced their side even in a less laudable quarrel? Could he then be blamed on this occasion? Let any young man in his place cast the first stone. His feelings may be guessed when he saw that circumstances began to connect him every day more closely with Khabár's fate.

His love for Anastasia, strengthened by obstacles, assuredly played an important part amid these agitations of his mind, and in his sympathy with her brother. Without definite object, without being able to render any account to reason, this love was nevertheless perpetually acquiring fresh violence: it made a still greater advance from the following circumstance:—

When Antony returned home with Khabár, the morning, heralding a splendid day, had already dawned. To see their farewell, no stranger could have guessed that one of the young men was accounted, by the family of the other, a minister of Satan. Admittance through the wicket was obtained for Khabár, by the devotion of a servant. Antony opened his gate with a key which he carried with him. He stopped on the stone steps to take breath after his rapid walk, and to inhale the fresh vernal air. The gardens on the declivity of the town hill, and beyond the Moskvá, were bursting into leaf. They seemed as if they were covered with a veil of green. The river Moskvá, freed from its icy fetters, was putting off its thin curtain of mist, as if to show the proud loveliness of its waters and the fresh verdure of its banks. Through the fantastic shifting shroud of this mist, could be seen now the cupola which crowned the Donskói monastery, gleaming over the meadows, then the white walls of Símonoff. Hardly had Antony found time to cast an eager and delighted glance over this picture, so new to him, when the well-remembered window creaked over his head; he looked, and—can he trust his eyes?—does he dream?—at the window appears Anastasia, at an hour when the birds had hardly begun lazily to prune their wings. Yes, 'tis she, but pale and sorrowful. It seemed to Antony, from the appearance of her eyes, that she had been weeping, and that she shook her head as if reproachfully. . . . He doffed his bonnet, and stood before her with his hands clasped, as if imploring her for some grace; but the fatal window closed—the lovely vision vanished.

Not knowing what to think of this mournful

apparition, Antony remained for some moments on the steps; but seeing that the window did not again open, and fearing some indiscreet witness, he entered his own abode. Anastasia is sad—she passes her night in tears! he thought; and remembering all the marks of interest she had shown him—him, a foreigner, one detested by her father—he felt a sad yet sweet sensation, and applied to himself, with a feeling of pride and love, the appearance of to-day. He fell asleep when the sun was already high; but even in his sleep the form of Anastasia left him not.

Together with his heart examine the heart of the maiden, brought up in domestic seclusion, who had never left her chamber-cell, nor passed beyond the bounds of her garden, and suddenly touched with love. Add to this, that she every day beholds the object of her affection; add, too, her father's detestation of that object; add, too, that she was bewitched; that she, a mortal, could not hope to oppose the supernatural powers, which were not to be chased away even by the most passionate, the most ardent prayer. After analyzing all this, can it be wondered at, that she had already ceased to oppose those powers, and that she yielded herself to the enchantment? Eagerly tracing the steps of the beloved stranger, Anastasia had remarked his departure from the house, the day before, with her brother—with her brother, who led a life of revel, whom her father frequently reprimanded for his nocturnal excursions. Was it surprising that he should seduce her lover also into this life of dissipation! Long did she wait for Antony, but Antony returned not. Never yet had he been so late: in her breast jealousy began to speak: she reproached her brother, she reproached the beloved stranger, with whom she had never yet exchanged a word, but whom she already accounted hers. She was melancholy, she was displeased, she accused herself of coldness, she wept. And at last he came. Let him see her weakness, let him know that she had been weeping, and for him!

The poor bird was alarmed at mid-day, by the appearance of the cruel vulture which had so often hovered round her nest. Again appeared Mamón in the house of Obrázetz; but this time not as the proud messenger of the Great Prince, but as a culprit, in the custody of two of the constables and two armed retainers. Before they led him from his house they had deprived him of his weapons.

In the name of the Lord Great Prince, they asked for Sínskoi-Khabar, son of the voevóda. It was not without some fluttering of the heart that he awaited his sentence of death. Instead of his doom, they informed him that the boyárin Mamón, by order of Ivan Vassílievitch had brought him a hundred roubles as a fine for slandering Khabar, and was to strike the earth with his forehead; yes, he had come, that Mamón, the proud, the terrible, the vengeful, to beg pardon of his foe! And how could he refuse to come? he was sent by the Great Prince, Ivan Vassílievitch. Horrible was the expression of his saffron face, distorted by the furies of his soul, his bloodshot eyes, his forest of sable hair, wildly standing on end. In such a form would the artist represent Satan, fettered by supernal power.

And he came, and gave Khabar a hundred

roubles.—“A hundred roubles in full count,” said he in a firm voice, and fell prostrate humbly before his foe,—once twice.—“That was for the Prince!” he cried; “but this is mine,” bending over Khabar’s foot, and leaving on it a deep bloody impression of his teeth. “That is my mark,” he repeated with an infernal laugh. Well was he named Mamón. Khabar uttered a cry, so severely was he wounded, and his first movement was to tear a handful out of his opponent’s beard. They were instantly parted.

“To the lists! I challenge thee to the field!” shouted Mamón.

“To the field!” cried Khabar: “it hath long been time. Let God judge between us.”

And the foes, having kissed the cross, and chosen seconds and sponsors, separated, thirsting for each other’s blood.

Obrazétz, not desiring to witness his enemy’s humiliation, was not present at this scene. When made acquainted with this catastrophe, he blessed his son. Notwithstanding the severe interdiction of the ecclesiastical powers, it was held disgraceful to refuse the trial by combat, to which any man was free to challenge another for a blow; and the prohibition of the ecclesiastical fathers was terrific: “And whatsoever man schal be defied vnto y^e Feeld, and schal com vnto anie Preeste for that hee maie receve y^e Holie Sacrament, the sam schal in noe wyse com to y^e Holie Communion, or kisse y^e Crosse: and whoso schal slay a man yn y^e sayde Feelde schal utterly destroie and kil ynys soule; and eftir y^e wordys of Basilius the Grete, hee schal be called and hyght an Assassin, and schal nat com ynto y^e Chirche, nor receiue y^e gyftis, nor y^e brede, nor receve y^e Holie Sacrament eight and tene yearis . . . He who ys slayne, him schal they nat bury.” What a sentence for our religious, god-fearing ancestors! But, honour, (though under another name,) which to them was dearer than every thing, claimed in their estimation the foremost place.

When they carried the news of this challenge to the Great Prince, he said—“Now it is not my affair, but the affair of the soudenik.”

The soudenik contained the following law:—“Whosoever schal pluck or tere anothere manny’s herd, and gif a wetenese schal testefie thereunto, the sam schal kiss the Crosse and doe battel in y^e Feeld.”

Against the law, laid down by the Great Prince himself, with his son and the boyárin, it was impossible to go; only it was ordered that the combat should not take place before the army returned from Tver: for the campaign they needed a brave soldier like Khabar.

The word “Field” cast a gloom over the house of Obrazétz, which, even without this cause of anxiety, was not too gay. This word fell like the stroke of a dagger on Anastasia’s heart; she knew that she was the cause of the terrible enmity between her father and Mamón, and might become that of her brother’s death. The word “Field” long went through the houses, as in our days the fatal card with the black border and death’s heads. The passenger going by the dwellings of Mamón and Obrazetz, might already scent in imagination the odour of incense and of corpses.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CROSS.

“Ah, nurse, dear nurse—I feel so weary,
So sad and ill—I sigh and sob
Oh, feel how my poor heart is oating!” . . .
“Alas! thou must be sick, my sweeting!”
“Help my child, O Lord, and save!
Whate’er thou wishest, ask and have . . .
Let the holy water bless thee!
Thy poor cheek is burning, dove” . . .
“I am not ill, nurse . . . I’m . . . in love.”

RÓUSHKIN.

KHABAR’S confidence in Antony the leech was so great, that he begged him to cure him of the injuries inflicted by the living weapon. The wound was tolerably deep; but how can we expect a young gallant, hardened by Russian snows, and the fatalism of his country, to pay any attention to danger? Under the operation performed by Antony upon his foot, he no more winced than if a bee had slightly stung him. Thanks to the force of youth and strength, and to the vigorous remedies employed by the physician, his cure was rapid: but even before his recovery, he showed himself to his comrades, and, covered by the veil of night, robbed the pretender to the Byzantine throne of some of his Haidée’s burning kisses. The only thing that disquieted Khabar in this affair, was the sorrow of his sister; the cause of which was nothing but her lively interest in him: that there was any other cause he did not even suspect.

Anastasia, who was now enabled to attribute her melancholy to the campaign which was so soon to separate her from her brother, and to the approaching combat, no longer restrained her grief, no longer stifled her tears within her bosom. They assured her that the combat would not take place—that the Great Prince, by his all-powerful command, had reconciled the foes; that Khabar would content himself with exacting the fine of a few *altines* fixed by law for a bloody wound, and that the whole affair would be forgotten. These assurances tranquillized her on her brother’s account, and at the same time concentrated all her thoughts upon one object, all the energies of her soul, that had before been divided between two persons equally dear to her.

Equally dear? God only knows! His eye alone, glancing to the depth of her breast, could see that her affection preponderated to the side of the heretic, so completely had enchantment mastered her soul.

Anastasia, during a whole day, looked and listened as the troops were assembling for the campaign. Formerly she had delighted to gaze from her window on their movements, so triumphant, so full of life; she consoled herself with the thought, that the departure of the greater part of the young gallants of Moscow would give her more freedom to walk in the gardens with her companions, and to dance the round. But now the sight of these troops was intolerable to her; it seemed as if they were besieging her, and blockading her father’s house. Did she open the window towards the river Moskvá, along the Great Street were filing dense masses of soldiers: did she go to the other casement—she saw the priests by the churches of the city blessing the standards; fathers, mothers, and kinsmen, incessantly entering the

* *Vide the message of the Primate Plinius to the citizens of Nóvgorod, in 1410.—Note of the Author.*

House of God, to perform the ceremony of *postriga* on their children, and to say prayers for the fortunate result of the campaign—she saw Iván the Young reviewing the troops. Did she open the window that looked into the stranger's court-yard—there she saw nothing . . . tears dimmed her eyes, and, sitting in the corner of her maiden bower, she could not forget herself: around her resounded the clattering of horse's hoofs along the wooden pavement, and penetrated to her chamber. On all sides she was besieged with signs of separation; her heart was overwhelmed with insupportable anguish.

In our times, an excellent education, the precepts of the mother and the governess, select reading, instruction from infancy in the laws of God, moral examples, and the relations of society, early guard the young girl's heart from the sunken rocks past which she has to sail; teach her intellect to be ever on the watch against temptation, and to distinguish falsehood from truth, what is injurious from what is profitable.

What guarded the hearts of our great-grandmothers from temptation but walls and fences? What was their reasonable education, what the precepts and examples, what the social relations, which could impress upon them the dangers of love, and prepare the maiden's heart for the trials it was to undergo? A mother: a frequent recourse to God and the saints, it is true, was the substitute—and sometimes an admirable one—for much of our modern education. But the precepts of the mother were, for the most part, confined to a rigid command to beware of the Evil Eye, to use the cross and prayers as a protection against diabolic influences; and whatever good might have been effected by the mother's exhortations in the heart of the daughter, was too frequently neutralized by the absurd conversation of the nurse and the tirewoman—tales about the adventures of bold and handsome princes, and songs full of the sweetness and melancholy of love. The walls were high, the tower and the chamber of the maiden were strongly guarded; but, let once opportunity aid the inclination, or the mere curiosity, of the heart—once that barrier passed, and sin, if not passion, triumphed over all—over the ties of family, over maiden shame, over religion. How numerous were the examples of boyárin's daughters, tempted by wandering gallants, flying with them to the wild greenwood, and there leading, with their paramours, a rude and robber life! Songs—those faithfulest legends of manners—prove this better than any thing.

However it might be, whether from unreasonable pliancy, the influence of the fiend, or the law of nature, Anastasia was entirely mastered by her love, and no longer dreamed of opposing a feeling which she attributed to magic. Like her companions, she had lived in maiden seclusion, was nourished in the same prejudices, felt the influence of the same tales and songs as disturbed the judgment of her friends; and, remark, she had not above her a mother's eye—a mother's daily blessing; besides, every day afforded her the opportunity of beholding the young and attractive foreigner, from whom she was separated only by a fence of wood; and cannot the heart overleap such barriers!

And thus Anastasia, given up wholly to her

love, was agitated by the thought that she was to be separated for a long period from the object of her affection. However she might examine her heart, however she might struggle to expel from it the Latiner, the Papist, the necromancer—she could not do it. Think as earnestly as she might, she could not tell the meaning of the words "Latiner" and "Papist;" something it must be, and something terrible—evidently, it meant a servant of the Evil One—of that sort accused by the holy councils. However, her godson, Andriúsha, had often assured her—had sworn by all the saints—that Antony was a Christian, that he believed in God, the Holy Virgin, and the Saints of God. How was she to examine into this; and, at the same time, how was she to save him from the agonies of hell? Long and earnestly did she meditate on this, till at last her heart inspired her with a great project—difficult, indeed, for a maiden brought up in rigid orthodoxy. What could be more precious to her than the crucifix which she always wore suspended round her neck? This holy thing, the sacred present of her mother, had never left her person since her baptism. It guarded her from sickness and misfortune, from the thunderbolt, and from the malignant beams of the star that strikes in the darkness of the night. It linked her to heaven, to all that her burning faith had imaged there, to her guardian angel. This sacred talisman, the pledge of purity of thought and feeling, had plighted her to the Lord; it was to descend, a holy heritage, to her posterity, as it had come down to her from her grandmother and great-grandmother, or accompany her to the grave, a sinless and godly virgin. She would have to present it at the terrible day of doom, without spot, without the rust of deadly sin; and yet with this holy relic, this sacred heirloom of family and heaven, she resolved to part—she resolved to give it to a heretic to save his soul . . . and lose her own! . . . no, it would be a good work to turn a Latiner to the orthodox faith. What struggles, what agonies, what prayers, did not this sacrifice cost her! . . . and yet she determined to make it.

To the performance of her intention Andriúsha was necessary; he was her godson, and the confident of all the secrets of her heart. She began to expect him with impatience—time was precious.

Her father and brother had gone to the Field of Kóutchkoff to see Aristotle prove an enormous cannon—the triumph of his skill in foundery. The greater part of the domestics had accompanied them. Andriúsha had come to visit his friend Antony, but had not found him at home. The boy was preparing for the *post-riga*, (to which the Great Prince had consented, notwithstanding his little favourite's not having attained the legal age for warfare, sixteen years.) Perhaps he feared that he would not have another opportunity, before his departure, of seeing his godmother, whom he so fondly loved. He was sorry to leave Anastasia, she was so pretty, so caressing; she kissed him so sweetly, just as his mother had been wont to kiss him; and he came to bid her farewell.

How was Anastasia to begin the confidence which she was about to make to her godson! She prepared to speak, and yet she trembled;

she was as pale as death, as though she were summoning up her courage to do some great crime. Andriousha remarked her agitation, and inquired if she was not ill.

"I am not well," said Anastasia; and then, after a short pause, making an extraordinary effort, she took Andriousha by the hand, pressed it eagerly, and asked him if he loved his godmother.

"Next to my father, those whom I love most are thyself and Antony," cried the boy, kissing her hand.

From the maiden's innate modesty, and because it was contrary to the Russian customs, she had never before allowed him to kiss her hand; but now she only gently drew it back; then arose and looked if there was any one at the door of the hall: as soon as she was convinced that no one could hear her conversation except Andriousha, she asked him whether he loved the leech.

"Again I say, I know not what I would not do for him and for thee!" replied Andriousha, in a voice of lively interest.

"If so, I would ask thee touching a matter. Didst thou not tell me that Antony is baptized?"

"I did."

"That he believeth, as we do, in the Lord God, the Holy Mother, and the Holy Saints?"

"I am ready, even now, to swear it."

"Wherefore, then, say they that he weareth no cross?"

"My friend is wont to say, that *his* cross is in his heart."

"I understand thee not. That is something strange to me. Behold now, if all this be so, if he be not leagued with the Evil Spirit, will he not put on my cross?"

The boy's eyes sparkled. "Love me no more, let me never again behold thee," he cried, "if my friend doth not put on thy cross, and wear it."

"I will then . . . I will give him my cross . . . But hark thee, Andriousha, my dove" . . . she could not finish; but he instinctively understood that in her words there was a question of life and death.

With a trembling hand, flushed and agitated, Anastasia took off her cross. It was a large silver crucifix, bearing an image of the Saviour in black enamel; a small hag was attached to it. Gazing fearfully towards the door, she suspended it round Andriousha's neck, carefully concealing it in his bosom. All this was done with great haste and agitation, as though she feared that her resolution would fail: her fingers were entangled in the silken string, and she with difficulty disengaged them.

"Tell him to cross himself in our manner* when he lieth down to rest, and when he waketh from his sleep," continued Anastasia; "and beware, Andriousha, betray me not; do not ruin me! . . . reveal not to my father that . . . Swear it!"

She said, "to her father" only, confident that her godson would never divulge it to any one else.

* The Russian mode of making the sign of the cross differs from the same rite as performed by the Roman Catholics. In both cases the fingers are carried first to the forehead, but thence, instead of applying them to the left shoulder, as the Catholic does, the Russian proceeds to the right.—T. B. S.

And Andriousha, trembling like the accomplice in some crime, bound himself to secrecy by the most solemn oath he could think of—"Maybe," he added, imperfectly comprehending his godmother's agitation, and desiring to tranquillize himself and her, "maybe, Nástia, we shall convert him to our faith by this cross. God knoweth whether this gift of thine may not be on his breast, when thou standest with him in the church, under the crown."[†]

"No, Andriousha; speak not to me of the crown . . . It is not for that I do this . . . I only grieve that he is a heretic . . . I would save him from the molten pitch in the other world" . . .

"Oh, Nástia, if he goeth not to Paradise, who can hope to come there?"

The nurse's cough was heard; the pair, who had concluded their secret treaty, hastened to recover from their confusion, and bid farewell to each other. Andriousha promised to visit his godmother again before his departure with the army.

When Andriousha was gone, Anastasia felt her bosom cold, cold, as though a mass of ice lay on it. She was plunged in tormenting thoughts, and now for the first time there rushed into her mind the difficulty of concealing from her nurse the absence of her cross. Where could she have put it? where lost it? Forgetting what had passed, she murmured to herself incoherent words, then felt for her crucifix, and missing it, was in agonies of despair. She had exchanged her mother's blessing for deadly sin; she had sold herself to Satan. Poor maiden! It was clear she was brought to this by necromantic power."

"What aileth thee, my dear?" enquired the nurse; "thou art all on fire; thou sittest shuddering, and murmurest unintelligible words."

"I am ill, dear nurse; I know not what I ail myself."

"Hath not some evil eye beheld thee? hast thou not caught cold? Drink some Epiphany water, my darling; 'twill take away thine ailment like a charm."

Anastasia took her nurse's advice: with a prayer and a sign of the cross she drank the water, and felt somewhat relieved. Was it to last long?"

CHAPTER XX.

THE KNIGHT POPPEL.

This is the place to relate how a new character appeared to take a share in the drama of our hero, and perhaps to perform one of the most important parts. This was Nicholas Poppel, a knight of the empire, the nephew and adopted son of the Baron Ehrenstein. Tall, handsome, active, haughty, and self-confident, he possessed all the exterior merits, and all the brilliant vices, calculated to please a courtier who possessed the same qualities. Ehrenstein, in adopting him, had gratified, at the same time, himself and the Emperor, who showed peculiar

[†] During the celebration of the Russian marriage ceremony, two crowns are held, one over the head of the bride, and the other over that of the bridegroom. This office is performed by persons chosen from among the wedding party by the "happy pair."—T. B. S.

favour to Poppel on account of the journey he had made to Muscovy, a land of wonders, as it was then represented. The Emperor expressed his satisfaction at the excellent selection which the baron had made; after this, how could the baron, devoted as he was to ambition, thinking of nothing but his own advancement, allow himself to entertain so much as the thought of confessing, that a son of his—a leech—who had been renounced by him from his infancy, had it in his power to stain for ever an escutcheon, which he himself considered equal to the blazon of many a crowned head! How could he venture, by the discovery of his fatal secret, to irritate his sovereign! His heart was hackneyed in the struggle after courtly laurels, and the voice of nature was unheard amid the chorus of passions, singing their music upon one and the same motive. It seemed as though all circumstances concurred to cherish in his heart this petty passion, and to extinguish the faintest spark of conscience—all things—even the court at which he, with others like himself, were rolling the wheel of fortune over the wrecks of feudalism—even the guide himself of this wheel. The court was plunged in frivolity; the Emperor, by his littleness of soul, made foreign nations wonder, and his own despise. This emperor was Frederick III., a monarch powerful in the resources of his empire; but contemptible in those of his own character. We remember how he terrified the Roman Pontiff by falling unexpectedly upon him on Christmas Eve, and how all this menace, which made Rome fly to arms, finished by Frederick's kissing the Pope's hand and foot, holding his stirrup, publicly reading the gospel in the habit of a canon of the Church, and at last departing amidst the laughter of the very persons who had been so terrified by him. Greatness of mind and weakness in a sovereign, are communicated to his court, and influences even the popular masses. This was said long, long ago, and has often been repeated: was it wonderful that the character of the baron, weak, frivolous, inconstant, perpetually wallowing in the slough of selfishness and vanity, should have found a new source of baseness in the vices of his sovereign? If even he did think of his son, it was only how to prevent any hint of his plebeian existence from reaching the ears of the Emperor and of his courtiers. To the honour of our times, such characters appear to us monstrous; but in the fifteenth century, and even for a considerable time later, they were not unfrequent.

Hearing of Antony's love for science, hearing of the attachment exhibited towards him by the leech Fioraventi, the baron was delighted both at the one and the other: both the one and the other would break for ever his humiliating connexion with the disinherited son. The self-devoting love of the baroness for her child did not alarm her husband; on this side he was secured by Amalia's oath, that she would never dare to disclose the secret of Antony's birth, nor attempt to claim for him his lawful inheritance. Under this condition she was permitted to see her son at the poor Bohemian castle; after her interviews with him, she had more than once attempted to touch the heart of the cruel father; but failing in this, and only irritating her husband by her pertinacity till he treated her more

coarsely than before, she retired altogether to the Bohemian castle. There she shut herself up, as if in a convent, passing her days in prayers for the welfare of her favourite. The choice of Poppel as the heir to their name and rank would have cruelly wounded her, had not the tidings from Moscow, which she received through the countrymen of the Jew Zacharias, faithful to his promise of gratitude—tidings of the favour shown by the Tsar of that country, and honours heaped upon her son—consolated the unhappy mother. From this moment all her thoughts and feelings turned towards the East. Muscovy became dearer to her than her native land. This country, which she had hitherto accounted barbarous, she began to figure to herself as a kind of Eden: its mere name threw her into a sweet agitation; she drank in with greediness all reports about it, to trace in them some slightest vestige of her darling son. There he would be happy without his baronial title—there he was safe! Why should not Antony remain in Muscovy? At his first call she determined herself to retire to that country—that land which her heart had drawn nearer to herself. There even death itself would be sweet, with him for whose sake alone life was precious to her. We have seen that the baron's tranquillity on the score of his disinterested son had been disturbed by Fioraventi's intimation, that he had been devoted to the profession of physic: we have seen how the baron quitted his defensive attitude, and began to act on the offensive by menaces of employing more formidable weapons—menaces which had driven Antony to take shelter under the protection of the Great Prince. In the mean time, the reports of the favour shown by that ruler to the leech Ehrenstein still further alarmed the proud father, and necessitated a new and more anxious vigilance. He began to apprehend that Antony, by means of the intercourse between Ivan and the Emperor, now become more frequent, might endeavour, at the instigation of Fioraventi, to pursue his lost rights, and disclose all the secret of his birth and education, all so humiliating to a baronial heart; and therefore, on ascertaining that the Emperor had determined on dispatching a new ambassador to Muscovy, to confirm and strengthen his amicable relations with its sovereign, he succeeded in having this mission confided to his nephew and heir, Poppel. To this Frederick III. the more readily consented, from Poppel having been, as we have probably mentioned, in Muscovy some years before, and consequently being well acquainted with the ruler and the court of the country. On the former occasion the baron's nephew had visited Russia rather as a traveller in search of adventures than in any diplomatic mission. He had been commissioned by the King of Rome, Maximilian, to learn what kind of country was that eastern land, about which reports began to reach even to the house and court of the Cæsars, and the affairs of which were beginning gradually to connect themselves with the politics of Europe. As he had arrived in Muscovy without a suite, the Russians would not believe that he was an ambassador from the Roman sovereign; he had, however, been enabled to boast of having received favours from the Great Prince, whose delight it was to see

foreigners arrive at his newly-created court, to admire his power, and to carry back accounts of that power to their own country. This time the knight Poppel came to Moscow as an actual ambassador from the Emperor, with presents and full credentials.

Though not informed by his uncle of the family secret involving the birth of Antony, he was, however, empowered by the baron to discover what sort of a pretender to the name of Ehrenstein was to be found in the court of Ivan; and to endeavour by every means in his power, without injuring him, to impress upon the Russian sovereign that the leech Antony was of low extraction, and had adopted, without possessing any right to it, the noble name so illustrious in Germany. If Antony had happened, unintentionally, to bear the name of Ehrenstein, and was content to bear it quietly, without boasting of his family, and its distinction in the empire, or preferring any claim to baronial rank, then Poppel was instructed to leave him in tranquillity. Who was more likely to execute this commission with rigorous punctuality than the person who had been selected to inherit the haughty baron's name and rank? Assuredly the knight Poppel, armed with such powers, and such splendid hopes, would be likely not to show any want of energy in defending his rights: it was only to be feared that he, from the lightness of his character, might overstep the authority entrusted to him—an authority, on this occasion, sufficiently limited. He reached Moscow two days before the trial of the enormous cannon.

On the day of his arrival, Antony received a visit from the deacon Kouritzin. Every interview with this wise and science-loving deacon began with the communication of some favour or gracious message from the prince, with an offer of his services, or a warning against some danger. All this he said and did as in the name of some mysterious personage, who had commanded him to be Antony's protector, and to watch over his welfare. Commanded? Who could this be but the Great Prince? It was not he, however. Even had Kouritzin brought to these interviews a heart full of friendly interest, his conversation, overflowing with the love of science, would always have rendered him a welcome guest to Antony; in this manner the solitude of Ehrenstein was becoming gradually more and more peopled with love, kindness, and friendship. The only thing which gave him pain was the stern and obstinate estrangement of Obrazetz himself.

The deacon, having informed him of Poppel's arrival, added that he was charged by command of his secret master, whom he always called his preceptor also to place Antony from that time forward, more particularly upon his guard. At the moment of communicating this warning he gave him a letter. 'Twas written in the well-known hand of the Moravian brother. Heavens! 'twas a letter from his mother. The missive was kissed a thousand times before Antony's trembling hands could break the seal. It informed her much-loved son how she rejoiced in his welfare; hinting, also, that in consequence of certain circumstances, involving a family secret, his mother desired that Antony should remain in Muscovy, whither she intend-

ed to follow him as soon as he had obtained a permanent settlement in that country. The baroness cautioned him to be on his guard with the imperial ambassador, the knight Poppel—"This man is perilous to thee," added the tender mother; "he hath been adopted by the Baron Ehrenstein, a relation of ours, who is favoured by the Emperor, proud, out of measure ambitious, and who would count himself and all his house disgraced, if he should hear that his namesake is a leech."

What tender love breathed, like a perfume, through this letter! Antony read and re-read many times each expression, which only a woman, a mother, or some creature equally loving, could have linked together into such simple and powerful eloquence. These expressions had not been hunted for in the intellect or the imagination; they fell direct from the heart to the pen. Even so are precious pearls shaken from their cradle by the slightest touch; while the poor, unripe, and worthless ones can only be obtained by forcing open with violence the close-shut lips of the shell. A man who loves says almost the same thing, but not quite the same; perhaps more sensibly, but never with such an insinuating sweetness. Antony's mother begged him to remain in Russia; she herself desired to join him: and why not? thought the young man, inflamed by the dream which his heart approved. Is not her will the will of fate? The sovereign of Russia held him in high honour; Iván the Young, the heir and hope of Russia—good, brave, and generous—was singularly well disposed towards him. The Russians, at least many of them, were ceasing to cherish ill-will towards him, and with time would love him; already he had made friends even among them. He might always visit his preceptor when he pleased. There was also one being which became, day by day, more dear to him, which flitted round him in his dreams, nestled in his bosom, and implored him so tenderly not to depart. You will guess that this was Anastasia; for her sake he would have exchanged his fatherland—the wondrous sky of Italy—its earth, that luxurious flower-sprinkled cradle, where the zephyr, nourished on perfume and softness, hushes the favoured child of nature with the harmony of Tasso's song; for her he would exchange the Coliseum, the Madonna, the Academia, all, all, for the grey heaven of the North—for the deep snow, the wild fir-trees, and the barken huts, with all the ignorance that dwelt beneath their roofs. What then! His mother would bring with her his country; the wondrous heaven of Italy he would find in Anastasia's eyes, the burning noon on her lips, all delights, all possible joys, in her love. But his creed was not the same as hers; therefore it was that they had given him the name of Heretic—equivalent in the eyes of Russians to that of Tartar. By simply adopting the Russian faith, he might annihilate all the barriers, all the obstacles, that so completely divided him from the family of Obrazets. It was only on this condition that Anastasia's hand could ever be his; but then he would be a traitor, and from interest. Never would he consent to that! "No, it is not my lot to possess this treasure," he said to himself; and all the while sweet flattering thoughts sprang up

in the ardent dreamer's head and heart, and gave him some inexplicable hope. The very obstacles, the very strangeness of the German's love for a Russian maiden, gave additional fervour to that love.

"Be cautious with Poppel, I entreat thee, my dearest son!" These words seemed to cast a dark gloom over his mother's letter, and over his own heart: 'twas strange! Kouritzin, too, had warned him against the same person.

"Was it my fault," said Antony to the deacon, in a familiar conversation with him, "that I was born an Ehrenstein, and that fate brought into the world a haughty baron, a namesake? God be with him! I would not force myself into his family, and I am willing to forget him as wholly as if I had never even heard his name. The baron is childless, and hath adopted Poppel; can these worshipful knights fear that I should put forth claims to their inheritance! O, they may be quite easy on that score! I am proud enough to spurn all honours and riches, even though the law adjudged them to me, without my humiliating myself, without my suing, or making myself unworthy of honours or wealth. My name is my lawful possession; I will not change it to pleasure any haughty baron on the face of the earth. It is an honour to me, not because it is borne by a baron of the empire, but because I bear it. My profession hath not disgraced it, and I know how to make it respected, if any dares to cast a stain upon it. I will never be the first to insult any man—my mother and those who desire my happiness, may be assured of that; but I will never submit to the insult of another. Both nature and education have taught me how to wash out in blood any blot upon my honour. Well are such styled offences of blood. I will be cautious of Poppel; such is the will of my mother. The further I can keep from him the better;—but if the haughty lordling attacks me—let him beware!"

The knight Poppel was received on this occasion with extraordinary honour as the imperial ambassador. Officers met him at some distance from Moscow, to congratulate him on his safe arrival. A deputation had been selected for this purpose, consisting of the *dvorétkoi*, the deacon Kouritzin, and some bayarins. This train was attended by the inevitable Bartholomew, whose duty it was to translate word for word whatever the ambassador might say. They were all splendidly attired in their glittering dress of ceremony: the sun seemed to joy in being reflected from their robes. The procession attended the envoy to the lodging prepared for him. The deportment and language of the boyarins expressed profound respect; and their quiet simplicity and ceremonial etiquette only swelled the knight's vanity, and blinded the little penetration he possessed. He prepared to lead these simpletons astray; the cunningest of all, at least in his own estimation was Bartholomew. In the meantime the "clowns," as the ambassador called them behind their back, had already penetrated his character, and put themselves in condition to give an accurate account of his moral and intellectual qualities.

The ambassador, intoxicated by his own grandeur, swelled and strutted, talking in a manner equally thoughtless and ill-bred. He

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often twisted his mustache, played with the golden fringe of his mantle, smoothed with a look of vanity the velvet of his dress, jingled his spurs like a boy, among his late comrades and playfellows, when he has just put on for the first time the uniform of an officer.

"What, when I came to your country before, air sirs, ye would not believe that I was the Emperor's ambassador! He hath," said ye, "but few servants; he giveth no largess of ducats or velvet. Now, look ye!" (he pointed to the crowd of court attendants, who stood at a respectful distance behind him, all gallantly attired.)

"We see, Lord Baron Poppel," replied the *dvorétkoi*; "we beseech thee, hold us not in fault for our former unbelief. We be but simple, foolish folk: we live out of the world; we know not the usages beyond sea."

"Would ye have ducats—right noble ducats? I can dress all your officers in Venetian velvet."

The deputation bowed profoundly to the golden calf.

"Would ye letters—a 'sheet,' as ye call it—from my great Emperor, lord of half the world? Here," (he pointed to a silver coffer which was standing on the table,) "I bring letters to your illustrious Prince. Ye paid me but scant honour before, but your lord sees far; he hath eyes of reason. He speedily understood the knight Poppel; and, therefore, my sovereign offereth to confer on the Great Prince, his dear friend, the dignity of king."

"Our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, Iván Vassílievitch," answered Kouritzin, firmly, and drawing himself up, "desireth the friendship of the Cæsar, but not his favour; an equal cannot confer on an equal. I speak not willingly; but if any thing is confided to your highness by the Emperor, it is not for us to hear his illustrious words—it is for our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, to answer, not for us."

Poppel blushed slightly, and endeavoured to conceal his confusion under the tinkle of his spurs. The deacon's words, however, had stopped his mouth for a time, and rendered him grave; and not without reason. He had assured Frederick that Iván, though a powerful and wealthy prince, would hold it a signal favour if the Emperor were to confer on him the title of king: but the thing was done; he bore a proposition on the subject to the Great Prince, and still confidently hoped that he could fascinate his ambitious heart with the splendour of royalty. When Poppel's confusion had passed, he expressed a desire, on the part of his master, to receive as a present from Iván Vassílievitch some living elks, and at the same time one of the nation called the *Bogouliás*,* who eat raw flesh; and he added, that the Emperor was displeased that he had not brought with him, on his return from his former visit to Russia, specimens of these animals and men. Then, haughtily raising his head, he inquired of the *dvorétkoi* whether Antony the leech had been long in Muscovy.

"Since the feast of St. Hierasimus of the Crows," replied the *dvorétkoi*.

"And doth the most mighty and most illustrious Iván admit a vagabond into his presence?"

* *Bogouliatches*, inhabitants of what is now the province of Berezóff, in the government of Tobólsk.—Note of the Author.

"Our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, holdeth the leech Antony in high honour, and oftentimes permitteth him to behold his royal eyes, and for them even the rabble is enlightened."

"'Tis pity—great pity! 'Tis a mere Jew villain and cheat. I knew him at Nuremberg; he began there by doctoring horses, then allied himself to the Evil One, and grew addicted to necromancy."

The interpreter smiled, and, turning to the boyárins, made a sign with his hand, as much as to say, "You see! I told you so!"

"Then," continued Poppel, "he began to try his leech-craft on men; and sent them into the next world by dozens at a time. They would have hanged him; but he managed to hide himself somehow, and to fly to your country."

The boyárins gazed with horror at each other: the deacon Kouritzin alone did not exhibit on his countenance the slightest sign of astonishment or fear. It was not worth his while to spend his words in a dispute with the knight: a man will not enter into an argument with a boy. Bartholomew made a dot-and-go-one movement with his leg, and then, transforming his attitude into a figure of a note of interrogation, exclaimed—"A Jew rascal . . . he must undoubtedly be so, most illustrious ambassador! I saw it at once the moment I looked upon him, and said so to all I met. An accursed Jew! Ay, ay! indubitably. And he speaketh through the nose with the true whine of Israel, and is as arrant a coward as we usually find among the Hebrew pack. Sometimes he is as proud as if he were fain to spit in the face of Heaven; then, again, you have but to speak a little sharply to him, and anon he will tremble you an' 'twere an aspen leaf."

"I am well content that here, at least, you have penetrated him, worshipful Master Interpreter."

"Now, many of us count him a trumpery quacksalver: I have proclaimed him to all Moscow. Without boasting, I may be bold to say, most illustrious ambassador, I have but to hint a thing, and at all ends of the city they cry—'That must be so; the court interpreter hath said it!' O, Russia knoweth me, and I know Russia!"

"I shall entreat thee to be useful to me too, in repeating my words!"

"I will not fail—I will not fail! I will soon spread new tidings about him on the wings of zeal," (dot-and-go-one again of the lame leg); "and I will do it out of love for pure truth," (another hop). "How we shall bless you here, most noble of noblest knights, if you can prevail on our lord to kick the Jew quacksalver out of the bounds of Muscovy!"

"That is easily done. I will open Iván's eyes: I will offer him another leech. I have in my eye a man not like that mountebank: namely, Master Leon, the Emperor's court physician—such a jolly knave, such a jester! And a wonderful master of his mystery. For example, once the Emperor wished to try how far his skill could go: he ordered them to have him baited with dogs. The dogs rent him to tatters, but all of them died, and he!—he died too, think ye! or at least was laid up! No, he healed all the wounds, and the next day appeared laughing at court, as if nothing had happened."

"Wonderful!" cried the interpreter, and hastened to communicate to the deputation this triumph of medical skill.

The boyárins crossed themselves with signs of fear and astonishment. Kouritzin alone, with an expression of incredulity, shook his head.

"And how call you this fellow here . . . this . . . Jew?"

"Antony the leech," replied the dvorétzkoï.

"He hath, I suppose, some surname?"

"I think Hershtan, my lord."

"That is, Ehrenstein," added the translator.

"Ehrenstein! And doth the villain know whose mantle he hath put on? . . . In the whole empire, methinks in the whole world, there is but one Baron Ehrenstein: he is near the person of my Emperor, Frederick the Third: he is lord of broad lands, and richer than many provincial princes of Russia. He hath no children; and I, the knight Poppel, simple as I stand here, have been accounted by him and the Emperor worthy to be inheritor of the illustrious name and rank of Baron Ehrenstein."

"The Almighty knoweth whom he honoureth with such high favours," said the interpreter.

"We will teach this base pretender—we will finish his schooling," interrupted Poppel, growing more heated, and with a sneer. Then he turned to the deputation, and said, bowing courteously—"For the present, permit me to bid ye farewell, fair and worthy sirs; and to entreat you to convey to the high, mighty, and thrice illustrious Lord of All Russia, my gratitude for the signal honour he hath shown me in sending ye to greet me; I feel, to the bottom of my heart, the weight of this honour, and shall endeavour worthily to deserve it."

The boyárins respectfully took their leave; there, however remained with the envoy, as was customary, two officers. This was intended to be a mark of honour, and at the same time, to keep a watch upon his movements. Poppel made a sign to the interpreter, requesting him to remain.

"Go, good fellow, to the leech Antony," he said to Bartholomew, "and tell him that I, ambassador of the Roman Emperor, command him, a subject of the Emperor, to repair instantly to my presence."

"Is it to cure any of your servants? God forbid! Once a baron here, an old man, took it into his head to consult him. In a moment the leech sent him into the other world; and a boy, too, of the baron's, a servant—whom he loved as a son—only touched the lips of the dead, to give him the last Christian kiss—he, too, gave up the ghost, so strong was the poison that Antony had given to the dead."

"O, disquiet not thyself! I would not trust him with a cat of mine. Only do my bidding."

Almost out of his wits with delight—like a man possessed of the demon of vanity, Bartholomew presented himself before the leech Antony. Tone, attitude, gesture, expression—all marked a sense of importance, beyond any thing that had been seen or heard of in him before. This unusual ecstasy did not escape Ehrenstein:

* At a Russian funeral, just before the corpse is carried to the grave, the face of the dead is uncovered, and all present approach to kiss the forehead, therein offering "the last-Christian salutation."—T. B. S.

he measured him from head to foot, looked him all over, and could not refrain from laughter.

The interpreter began to unfold his mission, puffing for breath, but still preserving his tremendous majesty:—"The ambassador of the most high and mighty Emperor Frederick the Third, the thrice noble knight Poppel, by addition Baron Ehrenstein, (here he looked ironically at Antony,) commandeth thee, the leech Antony, to appear before him without delay."

"Commandeth! . . . me! . . . without delay! . . . said Antony, continuing to laugh with all his soul—"Thou hast mistaken, methinks, Signor Great Ambassador of ambassadors."

"I tell thee what I heard with mine own ears."

"Ay, they are long enough . . . Are any of his train sick?"

"No."

"And if I go not, what—will my head be firm on my shoulders?"

"I will not answer for it. Beware! Antony the leech!"

"Then go thou, most illustrious interpreter, and tell this most illustrious ambassador, and knight, and baron, that he is a churl; and that, if he would see me, let him appear before me, Antony the leech, by addition, Ehrenstein—plain Ehrenstein, without the 'Baron;' and, at the same time, tell that fool, formerly printer, Bartholomew, that if he dareth to show his face to me, I will cut off his long ears." (Here, with a vigorous hand, he compelled the interpreter to make a most scientific pirouette, opened the door, and hurled the contemptible being out of it so violently, that his feet clattered down the stairs as if they were counting the steps.)

CHAPTER XXI.

THE GIFTS.

"Aye keep well this talisman:
'Tis Love's gift, and it will aid thee
More than magic ever can!" —POUSKIN.

Moscow, which at the period of our story spread over numerous suburbs, wards, and outskirts, enclosed between them groves, fields, and meadows. The most extensive of these fields were those of Vorontzoff and Koutchkoff; in the first of which was situated a palace and gardens of the Great Princes of Muscovy—a favourite summer residence of the sovereigns. Here they enjoyed the sport of hawking: from hence they went to chase wild beasts in the deep forests which covered the eastern bank of the Yaouza; from hence they could revel in the distant view of their Kreml—the quarter beyond the Moskva, the Daniléffskii monastery, and the suburbs on the further side of the Yaouza. In front, straight across the stream, whose rapid current was interrupted by numerous mills, the Great Prince's palace gazed face to face on the holy walls of the Andronieffskii convent. The *Vassilieff* field, (where now is situated the Foundling Hospital,) for the most part marshy ground, lay between the *Great Street* and the *Varskaia* Street, which was higher up. The Koutchkoff field began at the Church of the Purification, the name of which awakens such numberless recollections of our liberation from the Tartar

yoke; a high mound of earth ran along it by the ford of Zaneplinnaia, and there quitting it, served as a boundary to this ward and its pool, finally ending at the river Moskva. The imagination would but confuse itself in tracing the other boundaries of the Koutchkoff field, which was year by year intersected by fresh lines of street, erected by the increasing population of Moscow. The topography of those days is so complicated and so obscure, that the patience of a Balbi would find it an insuperable stumbling-block.

The appearance of the Koutchkoff field was highly diversified: smiling pastures, rich harvests and groves, and steaming swamps. There, between the streets, fed flocks and herds, or moved long ranks of mowers, or gleamed the reapers through the waving corn; there cried the land-rail and the corn-crake; the nightingale poured forth his burning song, or the groan of the murdered traveller died away unheard. On the day on which we are about to visit the Koutchkoff field—a day bright and cheery, lighted up with gay sunbeams—along the meadow extending from the Purification Church to the marsh (where now are the Clear Pools) the people were scattered in numerous and motley crowds, apparently awaiting some spectacle with joyful impatience. The Great Prince himself, with his son and a train of courtiers (among whom Andriousha had succeeded in being,) was sitting on horseback under the grove which shaded the walls of the monastery, and seemed to share the impatience of the crowd. Within sight of them, close to the marsh, had been constructed a wooden hamlet, at which they were about to fire the immense cannon recently cast by Aristotle.* Several foolhardy young men, reckless by daring or by fatalism, had concealed themselves at daybreak in this wooden fort, and there lay perdué, fearing only that the constables should drive them from their hiding-place—i. e. that they should save them from danger of death. In the thicket, too, was stationed the knight Poppel on foot, concealing himself behind the officers and Bartholomew from the sight of the Great Prince, to whom he had not yet been presented. He enquired of the interpreter whether he could see the leech Antony, who had succeeded in offending him so bitterly by his disobedience. What were his feelings, when the interpreter pointed out to him a tall handsome German, in a velvet mantle, gracefully managing a fiery steed! The Great Prince was seen frequently to turn to his leech, and appeared to be conversing with him most graciously. Bitterly was Poppel undeceived! he had previously made an imaginary portrait of Antony, whom he had pictured to himself as a little sickly dwarfish individual, with a red beard. His face grew livid with rage; hate and envy sparkled in his eyes: he bit his lip: he thought he beheld in the person of the young German his rival as well in the favour of the Russian sovereign as in the pursuit of his family rights. The leech threw him completely into the shade by his manly vigorous form, and his graceful deportment: his dress, too, was not less rich than that of the imperial ambassador, and was even in better taste. The spurs alone were wanting

* The most immense cannon of this time—the Tsar cannon—was cast by Debosiz.—Note of the Author.

(Poppel remarked even this!) . . . to make him equal to the illustrious knight; but even the spurs might be granted him by the Great Prince. From this moment he vowed to humble Antony, to trample him in the dust, to annihilate him: this was the internal vow made by the noblest of noble knights! . . . Poor Antony! and was it thy fault that thou wert born so well-looking?

"It comes! it comes!" shouted the people; and immediately after these exclamations, in the direction of the forest, which blackened both banks of the rivulet named the Neglinnaia, streamed a many-coloured throng, over whose heads gaped a huge brazen gullet. This was a cannon of extraordinary size and calibre; it seemed to be reclining, as it were, on the shoulders of the people who were dragging it along, and it wallowed heavily from side to side, as though delighting in its triumph. Joyful shouts accompanied and received it; behind it came Aristotle, on horseback. Those of the people who were nearest extolled his might, his skill—even kissed his feet. "Ey, what a mother of cannons thou hast made!" they said, in ecstasy, struck with the idea of power embodied in the engine he had constructed. Try to touch the mob as powerfully with the idea of the Beautiful!

When the cannon arrived at the destined spot, Aristotle commanded the German artilleryman (this duty was usually performed by Germans) to lower it from its truck: then levelling it at the wooden fortress, he fixed it on the carriage, and ordered the gunner to load it with powder, and to put in the ball, which was nearly as large as a man's head. The people were warned to retire to a greater distance. The match was already burning in the hand of Aristotle himself; he prepared to apply it to the touch-hole and . . . he stopped; a thoughtful shade passed over his face, his hand trembled. What if the gun should burst? . . . He feared not for himself; no! but for his creation—his cathedral—which would perish with him. He raised his eyes to heaven, crossed himself, applied the linstock to the cannon—the brazen throat belched forth a burst of smoky fire, a report followed; the neighbourhood repeated it in numberless echoes. It seemed as though the foundations of the earth were shaken: a part of the people fell on their faces, thinking that an enormous iron wheel had just thundered along the ground. Again a report, yet louder; again—and the people, becoming familiarized to the sounds, arose crossing themselves, and blessing themselves from peril of the bearer of the thunder. They look—the wooden fort was already in flames. Hardly had Aristotle explained that he would fire no more, when loud shouts filled the air, and the artist was lifted on high in the arms of the delighted crowd. In this triumphal manner they carried him to the Great Prince. Iván Vassilievitch was transported with joy; he threw a golden chain around the artist's neck, kissed him on the forehead, and gave him the title of gold-bearer. The people were in raptures at these favours shown to a man who had cast a bell to call them to prayer, cannons to conquer their enemies, and was preparing to build a cathedral to the Holy Virgin.

Suddenly, from among the burning ruins of

the fort, there arose joyful cries, the breeze swept aside the smoky curtain, and there appeared, one after the other, two heads: they belonged to the pair of daring hairbrains who had concealed themselves in the building. Providence had preserved them. Excepting some trifling bruises on the limbs, they had suffered no injury whatever.

"Well done, lads! well done, gallants!" roared the people to them.

And for a praise like this, they had wellnigh sacrificed their lives! Such, from time to time immemorial has been the Russian.

The Great Prince, delighted with the successful trial of the cannon, and resolving to make use of it at the siege of Tver, bade farewell to Aristotle, and galloped off to the city, followed by the whole train of courtiers, and among them Antony. A cloud of dust rose up behind their horses, and, drifting over the thick-
et, enveloped the imperial ambassador. The mob had hardly observed him, and had paid no particular attention to him. One spectacle, by its superior interest, had distracted them from the other. Enraged and sullen, Poppel, slouching his hat over his eyes, and plunging his spurs into his steed, wreaked his vengeance on the poor animal. Galloping home, he shut himself up alone with his gloomy thoughts.

On the other hand, Antony was all joy, all triumph. That day the Great Prince had been unusually gracious to him; for which there were two reasons. He knew that Aristotle, so useful, so indispensable a servant, loved Antony like a son; and he endeavoured on this occasion to express his good-will towards the artist, by showing favour to those belonging to him. Iván had also already heard of the insolent message of the ambassador to his court physician, and desired, by the kindness of his demeanour towards the insulted person, to compensate for the outrage offered by the haughty baron. As he rode with Andriúsha to his own lodging, Antony retained no recollection of the affront which had been offered to him by the German envoy. He was, however, less delighted by the favour shown him by the Great Prince, than by a secret voice that seemed to whisper in his heart, and prophesy something unusually agreeable. This presentiment was confirmed by Andriúsha's mysterious words, promising him, as soon as he reached home, to make him a present, so precious, so invaluable, that he could not even conceive it in his imagination. Anastasia has some share in this secret! thought the young man, urging forward his steed. When the gate of his quarter was opened, he, without waiting till they removed the lofty horizontal bar, boldly dashed his horse over it.

"Speak quickly, quick! Dear Andriúsha, what is thy secret?" enquired Antony, almost before they had entered his chamber.

The boy assumed an important air.—"What I have to tell thee is no trifle," said he in a slightly agitated voice, and trembling. "They say that in this matter lieth the salvation of thy soul."

"Explain! torture me not!"

"Here, in Moscow, report goeth abroad that thou art leagued with the Evil One. I know that this is false—a calumny of foolish and wick-

ed people. Thou art only of the Latin faith, like my father, as I myself was ; a Latin, but a good Christian. It seemeth, however, that the Russian faith is, somehow, better than yours ; otherwise they would not have made me change my former religion. Thou sayest, that thou bearest the cross in thy heart. Nastia and I understand not this, and we are much afflicted at our uncertainty. Wilt thou not set our minds at ease ! . . . (Andriúsha drew forth the massive silver cross from his bosom, and undid the string from his neck.) "Take this cross, whereon is the image of the Saviour, put it on, and wear it. This cross is Anastasia's—her mother's dying gift. She hath taken it off for thee—for the health of thy soul, for thy salvation. May it protect thee in all thy paths, and bring thee into the Russian Church ! Ah ! mayest thou one day meet there my god-mother !"

As Andriúsha spoke these words, tears streamed over the eloquent missionary's burning cheek ; nor could his young friend repress his feelings. He bathed the precious gift with his tears. He covered it with burning kisses. Crossing himself, Antony put on the crucifix. "Behold !" he said, "I put on her cross with joy—with rapture. Tell Anastasia this ; tell her, that every day I will pray before it—that it shall never leave me, unless they take it from my corse . . . No, no ! what am I doing, what am I saying, fool that I am !" he added, recovering from his first feeling of rapture.

A dreadful thought flashed on his brain. He loved Anastasia with a pure yet ardent love ; with what definite aim he knew not himself ; but whither would his acceptance of the cross lead him ? Would it not betroth him to Anastasia as bridegroom to bride ? To a Russian maiden !—to one that could never be his until he changed his religion ! To possess Anastasia, he must become a traitor to his faith . . . 'Twas no light cross that he was about to bear. Could he dare to refuse it ? In what light would he appear to her ? As a necromancer, as a magician, as one leagued with the Fiend . . . Was he, then, to plunge blindly into the fatal future ! . . . He reflected, too, that Anastasia, by relinquishing, from love to him, her cross, her mother's blessing, might repent of her sacrifice—that the thoughts of that sacrifice would afflict her. Meanwhile he would wear the cross, but only for that day—to-morrow he would restore it to Anastasia. By this he would prove to her that he was not allied to the powers of evil, and that he was a good Christian. By giving back the cross he would tranquillize her. Thus he would reconcile his duty and conscience with his love.

"I will not hide from thee," said he to his little friend, as he prepared himself for this moral triumph, "that Anastasia had acted unwarily in sending me this priceless gift unknown to her father, even though what she hath done arose only from desire to help and save her brother's soul ; and I have perhaps, unreflectingly, said what thou oughtest not to have heard. And thou too, poor boy ! hast fallen into this sad struggle, which was unfit for thee . . . I am the cause of all. Forgive me, dearest friend, dear brother ! . . . Thou knowest not the fatal passions that tear the heart of man, and cloud

his reason, even till God's noblest creature becometh like unto the beasts. Never mayest thou know those passions, pure and noble creature ! Thy years are years of Paradise : woe to him who troubleth them ! . . . See now, I take the cross, and I put it on with Christian joy and gratitude ; but to-morrow I will restore it. I will never give her cause to repent. The blessings of a mother cannot choose but be dear to her. Her sorrow would poison, for me, all the sweetness of her gift ; it will only remind me how grievous must be for her the sacrifice that she hath made at the cost of her health, of her tranquillity ; and for the preservation of both the one and the other, I am ready for any sacrifice, for any torture. Learn more surely, this day, this moment if possible, whether she doth not encounter such a danger. Look with attention in her countenance ; see whether thou dost not mark the trace of sickness, the shadow of grief. Listen to her words, to her voice. Conceal nothing from me ! Tell her, in my name, all that thou hast seen or heard. Bless her for her priceless gift ! Say, that from this day forth I will cross myself with the Russian cross, and pray with the Russian prayers. Thou wilt teach me the Russian prayers, wilt thou not ? I will begin and end them with a thought of her."

Antony spoke this, interrupting his words, now by showering kisses on the dear missionary, then again by drawing the cross from his bosom and pressing it to his lips. The boy saw his friend for the first time in such an agony of agitation ; his lips formed the words convulsively ; his eyes gleamed with a kind of ecstasy ; his cheeks were flushed. Andriúsha was terrified by the agitation which he beheld : he already repented of having deprived both, perhaps, of tranquillity and health. Endeavouring, as far as he could, to calm his friend, he promised to do all that he requested ; but the danger of witnesses prevented him, that day at least, from speaking to Anastasia on the subject of their grand secret.

Antony's fears were prophetic : a storm had already gathered over the head of the enchanted maiden.

At midnight the old nurse had cautiously risen from her bed, and looked how her foster-child was sleeping. The poor girl was quite feverish : her swan-like bosom seemed to heave laboriously. The nurse was about to throw over the maiden a covering of marten skins : she looks with falcon eyes—"Holy Mother of God ! her cross is gone ! Lord, good Lord ! what can have become of her cross ?" The old woman wellnigh shrieked. She sought around the chamber—'twas nowhere to be found ! Perhaps the string had broken, and the cross was lying by her side, under the pillow. At any rate, she must wait till morning. The whole night she never shut her eyes. In the morning she looked for the cross, in the bed—under the bed—'twas not to be seen. She then began to observe whether its absence was remarked by Anastasia Vassilievna. No ! not a word on the subject. Only in dressing herself, the daughter of the boyárin, with apparent confusion, concealed her bosom from the nurse. The latter ventured to speak about the cross—Anastasia sobbed ; and at last, on the

nurse's promises, vows, and oaths, not to tell her father, the maiden said that she had probably dropped the cross as she was walking in the garden—that she had sought for it, but could not find it. To what tortures can we compare Anastasia's condition at this moment! And even the nurse felt no slight suffering. To tell the boyarin, would be to confess herself in fault for not remarking how the cross was lost: not to tell him, might endanger her life. Whether to tell him or not, the old woman could not decide: it finished, however, by her fearing to afflict her mistress, and hoping to recover the lost crucifix, and concealing its loss from the boyarin, who was severe and implacable on such occasions.

I had almost forgotten to relate, that on the same day the knight Poppel visited Aristotle to complain of the insolence of the leech, who was confided, as he heard, to the protection of the artist.

"He hath acted as he ought," replied the artist.

"What, a scoundrel Jew dare to disobey the Emperor's ambassador!" shouted the haughty baron.

"'Tis a slander unworthy a common man, much more an imperial dignitary! Leave such reports to the printer Bartholoméw. None but a fool would believe them."

"At least he is a quacksalver."

"Say rather, physician to the court of the Lord of Moscow. Know that the pupil of my brother is of a blood as noble as thine own, and hath equal rights to respect."

"I suppose, because he playeth the baron! What, Sir Artist—dost thou design to make a real baron of him?"

"Nothing would be easier. He hath but to claim what is his of right."

"Verily! . . . And, I suppose, as Baron Ehrenstein?"

"Undoubtedly, as what he is."

"This is Moscow news; at least, we know it not at my master's court."

"If it needs, they shall learn it there also as an ancient title of blood."

Poppel grew more and more enraged, and snorted with fury. The artist spoke with courtesy, sangfroid, and calmness.

"Dost thou know that this right is mine—that I am ready to defend it with my sword?"

"This time the sword of the knight will be broken against the law and the word of the Emperor."

"In his Majesty's name, I demand from thee an explanation of these riddles of thine."

"I will give it when I count it needful. I respect thy master equally with other crowned heads, but I acknowledge not his sovereignty. I am a citizen of Venice, and am here under the powerful protection of the Russian sovereign, Ivan, third of the name."

"My sword shall force thee to explain thyself."

Aristotle burst into a laugh.

"And this instant; if thou hast but a spark of honour."

Poppel seized the hilt of his sword.

"Gently, young man!" said the artist sternly, laying his hand on the knight's shoulder; "moderate thy passion; it can in nowise help

thy business. Compel me not to think that the arms of honour are, in thy hand, nothing but a dangerous plaything in the hands of a child; and that the German Emperor hath chosen to represent his person at the court of Moscow, not by a reasonable man but a hot-brained boy. Think again, Sir Knight! Look on my grey hairs—at my age I might be thy father, and dost thou challenge me to a senseless combat! What glory for the mighty hand of youth to be raised against the feeble arm of an old man! 'Twould be much to boast of! . . . And in mine own house! Would they not call us both madmen. Believe me, I will not draw my sword. Thou mayest fall upon me unarmed, and exchange the name of knight for that of assassin. That I am no coward, the lord of Muscovy will tell thee, and his best voevódas; and therefore I counsel thee to employ thine arms and thine ardour in a better cause, and to seek a more equal combat. I will add, besides, Signor Knight, that violence, whatever it may do, can only hasten the destruction of the rights in which thou art unlawfully dressed. Be reasonable and calm, and perhaps fate itself may aid thee in spite of justice."

With these words Aristotle begged the knight to leave him, and not to detain him from the important duties confided to him by the Great Prince. In case of refusal, he said he would be obliged to call in from the antechamber the two officers who were enjoined to watch the ambassador.

The knight Poppel was rash and haughty, but not brave. In men like him true courage cannot exist. He only wore its form, and this could deceive inexperience alone. "What a well-made fellow!" you cry, admiring the graceful outline of some elderly dandy. "'Tis all buckram, my dear sir, buckram and skill; nothing else in the world!" his valet-de-chambre will tell you, and unmask before you this artificial Antinous. Just so was Poppel's courage. Abashed, feeling the good lesaon he had just received, and full of dim ideas of a rival about to dispute his rights to the inheritance of a noble name and rich estate, he left the artist; but even then he would not confess his defeat. With his nose haughtily lifted in the air, like some bawbling shallop just cast by a mighty billow on the beach, he hummed, as he passed through the door, the gay song—

"O, Charles the Great was an emperor bold!
Seven bastards he had, no more:
They all did dream of a crown of gold,
Yet only one it wore."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CAMPAIGN.

"O whither fly, my grief to 'scape I
To forest green, my woe to slay!
To rivers bright, my woe to drown!
To sunny fields, my woe to lose!
In forests green 'tis there with me!
In rivers like a tear it flows!
In sunny plain the grass it dries!
From father and from mother ay
I hide myself, I earth myself."

MERZLIAKOFF.

YOUTH, like strong mead, foams and swells over the brink until it calms itself. It was to the revelry of youth that Khabar devoted the

whole night, in which now wine, now struggles with his comrades for supremacy in sports, now love, in turn called into play all his vigorous energy, and in all he came off victorious.

The morning star lighted him from the gate of the Despot of the Morea: the rosy dawn smiled on him as he reached his home.

Soon throughout the boyárin's quarter there began an unusual stir. Hither and thither bustled the domestics, bringing arms from the store-room, trying the paces of a steed, preparing an abundant provision of meat and drink for the armour-bearer, the squire, and other slaves, who were to accompany their master's son to the field. In the midst of all this bustle was heard the loud clattering of horses' feet, and immediately afterwards a numerous procession stopped at the gate. All who composed it were chosen men, matched in height and appearance to one another.

Their cheeks glowed with the purple bloom of health; their eyes sparkled like the glance of the falcon. "Largess to friend, death to foe!" was written on their haughty yet courteous brows. They were attired in short kaftáns of Germán cloth; on their heads were perched flat bonnets, coquettishly placed aside, giving them the air of gay wild gallants. A girdle, embroidered with silver, tightly confined their waist; by their side hung scabbards containing a long knife and a dagger, *entayled yn goldsmhythis werke*; at their backs a cudgel, so ponderous that none but an athletic champion could wield it. From this band three men detached themselves, and dismounting from their horses, announced their arrival by means of a ring suspended from the gate-post. These were the *heads and hundred-men* selected from several *guilds of the silk-merchants and clothiers*, who were desirous of seeking *war-honour* before Tver. They had come, by permission of the Great Prince, to *bow* before Símskoi-Khabár, and entreat him to take them under his command. The son of Obrazétz, well known for his daring at feasts and in the city brawls, was no less celebrated for military bravery: he had already once led the volunteers against the Mórdvui, and had gained in that expedition a large share of glory for himself and for his troops. In his campaign against the Mórdvui, had been exhibited not only bravery, the quality of every private soldier, but the rapid intelligent glance of a general, skilful to take advantage of every means offered by the enemy's ground, and the customs of those against whom he was operating. He had also shown himself possessed of the power of inspiring love and discipline in his warriors, who obeyed his orders with good-will. The Prince Daniel Dmitrievitch Khólskii, who had entrusted him with a detachment against Kazán, predicted, after this trial, that he would be a famous leader. Ivan Vassilievitch knew well how to appreciate these qualities, and on their account pardoned Khabar for the wild pranks of his youth; although he usually said, on these occasions, that he forgave him on account of Ivan the Young's friendship for him. And now Khabar expected with delight the command of the volunteers. They were all entertained, and drank the *loving-cup*, which the old voevóda himself carried round to them, wishing each of them the success he desired. The next

day they were to assemble at St. John's Church, there to hear a mass—from thence to repair to the parish church of St. Nicholas of the Flax, and thence—straight to horse. Obrazétz promised to obtain them from Ivan Vassilievitch the favour of being sent in the *avant-garde*, in order that they, with the body-guard of the Tsar, might clear the line of march before the army.

At daybreak the next morning all the household of Obrazétz was on foot. When the hour arrived for arming his son for the march, the voevóda's face was clouded with sorrow: this was no transitory grief, like the vernal inundation which swells suddenly on all sides, roars over the whole country, and subsides as speedily as it rose, vanishing as though it had never been. No, the father's sorrow resembled a clear fountain, which wells up half-unseen from beneath a ponderous stone, and yet feeds eternally some wide river. Many dark thoughts, during the past night, had risen in the old man's soul; and his anxiety was not unreasonable. He had already lost one son in war—that darling youth even now oft appeared before him in angelic robes; then pointing with indescribable anguish to a wound which marked his breast, seemed to wail forth—"It paineth me, oh, my father! yes, it paineth me sore." Then came his mother—what precious beings, and how bitter their loss! And now the old man, following them with his eyes, dismissed his remaining son to the war; and even if the battle should spare him, yet the lists awaited him at Moscow. If he should fall, who would remain to protect his sister—a maiden not yet settled in life? But dishonour was worse than death—"The dead feel no shame," is a saying valued among the Russians. Besides, he would never survive shame. All his trusts was in the *ordeal of God*: the mercies of the Lord are unaccountable. Trusting in them, Obrazetz proceeded to the oratory, whither, by his command, he was followed by Khabar and Anastasia.

Silently they go, plunged in feelings of awe: they enter the oratory; the solitary window is curtained; in the obscurity, feebly dispelled by the mysterious glimmer of the lamp, through the deep stillness, fitfully broken by the flaring of the taper, they were gazed down upon from every side by the dark images of the Saviour, the Holy Mother of God, and the Holy Saints. From them there seems to breathe a chilly air as of another world: here thou canst not hide thyself from their glances; from every side they follow thee in the slightest movement of thy thoughts and feelings. Their wasted faces, feeble limbs, and withered frames—their flesh macerated by prayer and fasting—the cross, the agony—all here speaks of the victory of will over passions. Themselves an example of purity in body and soul, they demand the same purity from all who enter the oratory, their holy shrine.

To them Anastasia had recourse in the agitation of her heart; from them she implored aid against the temptations of the Evil One; but help there was none for her, the weak in will, the devoted to the passion which she felt for an unearthly tempter.

Thrice, with crossing and with prayer, did Obrazétz bow before the images; thrice did his son and daughter bow after him. This pious

preface finished, the old man chanted the psalm, "Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High." Thus, even in our own times, among us in Russia, the pious warrior, when going to battle, almost always arms himself with this shield of faith. With deep feeling, Khabár repeated the words after his father. All this prepared Anastasia for something terrible; she trembled like a dove which is caught by the storm in the open plain, where there is no shelter for her from the tempest that is ready to burst above her. When they arose from prayer, Obrazéts took from the shrine a small image of St. George the Victorious, cast in silver, with a ring for suspending it on the bosom. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost!" he said, with a solemn voice, holding the image in his left hand, and with his right making three signs of the cross—"with this mercy of God I bless thee, my dear and only son, Iván, and I pray that the holy martyr, George, may give thee mastery and victory over thine enemies: keep this treasure even as the apple of thine eye. Put it not off from thee in any wise, unless the Lord willeth that the foe shall take it from thee. I know thee, Iván, they will not take it from thee living; but they may from thy corse. Keep in mind at every season thy father's blessing."

Anastasia turned as white as snow, and trembled in every limb; her bosom felt oppressed as with a heavy stone, a sound as of hammering was in her ears. She seemed to hear all the images, one after another, sternly repeating her father's words. He continued—"It is a great thing, this blessing. He who remembereth it not, or lightly esteemeth it, from him shall the heavenly Father turn away his face, and shall leave him for ever and ever. He shall be cast out from the kingdom of heaven, and his portion shall be in hell. Keep well my solemn word."

Every accent of Obrazéts fell upon Anastasia's heart like a drop of molten pitch. She seemed to be summoned before the dreadful judgment-seat of Christ, to hear her father's curse, and her own eternal doom. She could restrain herself no longer, and sobbed bitterly; the light grew dim in her eyes; her feet began to totter. Obrazéts heard her sobs, and interrupted his exhortation. "Nástia, Nástia! what aileth thee?" he enquired, with lively sympathy, of his daughter, whom he tenderly loved. She had not strength to utter a word, and fell into her brother's arms. Crossing himself, the boyarín put back the image into its former place, and then hastened to sprinkle his child with holy water which always stood ready in the oratory. Anastasia revived, and when she saw herself surrounded by her father and brother, in a dark, narrow, sepulchral place, she uttered a wild cry, and turned her dim eyes around. "My life, my darling child, my dove! what aileth thee?" cried the father. "Recollect thyself: thou art in the oratory. 'Tis plain some evil eye hath struck thee. Pray to the Holy Virgin: she, the merciful one, will save thee from danger."

The father and son bore her to the image of the Mother of God. Her brother with difficulty raised her arm, and she, all trembling, made the sign of the cross. Deeply, heavily she sighed,

applied her ice-cold lips to the image, and then signed to them with her hand that they should carry her out speedily. She fancied that she saw the Holy Virgin shake her head with a reproachful air.

When they had carried Anastasia to her chamber, she felt better. The neigh of a steed at Antony's staircase enabled her to collect her thoughts and come to herself. The sound turned her mind to the beloved foreigner, and to the danger which would have menaced herself and him if she had betrayed the secret of the crucifix. The feeling of remorse was overcome by love, and in its place arose the desire to remove the suspicions of her father and brother as to the real cause of her illness, if such suspicions existed. She summoned up her energies to deceive, but as yet she knew not how. The words, "separation from her brother," "the danger of war," "the weariness of solitude," cold and unconnected words, died away upon her lips. But it was not a difficult task to convince them, even without words, that these were the real causes. The dove, the water of the fountain, untrodden snow, were figured in the mind of her father and brother as less pure than Anastasia. Obrazéts would have slain the man who should dare to say to the contrary; it would have been a death-blow to himself even to suspect it. In his head there perhaps flitted some dim thoughts of ill; perhaps of ill caused by the heretic; but that Anastasia herself could ever venture to enter into any plot of the heart with him, could not even be conceived by the boyarín's imagination. The voevóda and his son, tranquillized by her recovery, returned to the oratory; not, however, without apprehension, that the benediction, so painfully interrupted, might turn out unfortunate. The father feared, that the cause of this unlucky accident was God's anger against his son on account of his dissipated life. Calling to his aid the words of the holy fathers, the examples of purity and sinlessness exhibited by many famous Russian warriors, who had earned glory on this earth, and an unfading crown in heaven, he exhorted Khabár to reform—"On thee, more than another," said Obrazéts, "lieth a heavy answer for thy sins. Thee the Lord hath gifted with reason, with bodily strength, with valour: to one is given a talent, to another two; to thee is given much, and thou tramplest it all in the mire. The Prince Khólmiskii laudeth thy military talents, and hopeth that in time thou wilt replace me. The old men, once my companions in arms, and now thine, my heart—all tell me that the name of Khabár-Símiskoi will be yet more famous in Russia than the name of Obrazéts-Símiskoi. Thy father, thy sovereign—the Great Prince, thy native land, expect this from thee. Dishonour not my hoary head, trample not upon my bones when I am laid in the grave—upon the ashes of thy mother and thy brother. Forget not that thou hast a sister of an age to be married: thy shame may fall on her—on all thy race. Remember that the *Lists—the judgment of God*—await thee here: to it thou must offer thyself with pure repentance, washed from every stain. Ivan, it is time to repent; it is time to remember that I have not long to live. Soon I, too, shall depart to another world. What dost thou command me to tell thy mother there!"

The old man's voice was full of sorrow, though not a drop stood in his stern eye. On Khabár's face the tears poured down in streams: he fell at his father's feet, and gave him a promise, in the name of the Lord, in the name of his mother, to reform from that moment; and to merit the love of his kinsmen both here on earth, and beyond the grave. As witnesses to his vow he took the saints of God. The promise was sincere; his strength and firmness of will were sufficient for its performance.

The faces of both father and son brightened up: their hearts, too, were more at ease. At the same time it seemed to them as though the oratory grew lighter, and the images of the saints gazed benignantly upon them.

At length the bells tolled for mid-day mass: mournfully they clanged; they announced to almost every house the departure of one dear inhabitant at least. Anastasia made an effort, and without waiting till her brother came to bid farewell to her, went herself to meet him. Khabár, whom Iván Vassilievitch called his post-haste voevóda, was already in full armour. His old squire gazed with rapture, now on his charger, now on the glittering panópy, as though upon a creation of his own: the one he had decked out with all his skill; the other, with all his skill also, he had polished till it shone like a mirror. In the farewell of the brother and sister spoke love, the most tender, the most touching. Often was the iron cuirass dimmed with tears; often did the hard gauntlets imprint the trace of his embrace upon the delicate waist of Anastasia. All the domestics assembled in a crowd on the steps, and followed the boyárin's son with blessings. His father accompanied him as far as the church.

Some one came to meet him, proudly prancing on a fiery steed, which raised a cloud of dust as he curveted along. The people stopped as he passed, and doffed their caps. By his rich armour, by the steel helmet adorned with turquoise, by the silver inlaid work of the cuirass and sword, glittering in the rays of the sun, you would have taken him for some noble youth who had just undergone the postriga; but in his face, his stature, his gestures, you would recognize in him a boy, delighted with his steed and armour as with a toy. It was Andrióusha, Aristotle's son—himself a toy of the Great Prince. He had ridden from the Church of the Annunciation, where the ceremony of the postriga had been performed on him: his appearance struck Obrazétz painfully; it recalled to his memory his own fair boy. Just such had been his younger son, when he was armed to attack the Knights of the Cross. The boyárin hastened to enter the church, and by prayer to stifle in his heart the mournful cry of nature. In bidding adieu to his remaining son, he clasped him in a long and strict embrace.—“The Lord be with thee!” he cried in a quivering voice; and these words accompanied Khabár throughout the whole campaign, greeted him when first he opened his eyes, and closed his lids to coming sleep. With these words he was armed more strongly than with his iron helmet or his sword.

Andrióusha hastened to pay his visit to Anastasia before the boyárin could return from church. In the antechamber of the upper room he met the nurse, who, congratulating him upon

the postriga, cautiously yet caressingly enquired, if the darling young gallant had seen her mistress's crucifix: perhaps she had dropped it, Andrióusha had found it, had desired to play her a trick, and had hidden it. At this unexpected question the little warrior fired up like gunpowder, but speedily recovered himself, and said with indignation—“Dost thou jest, nurse!”

And she began to swear, and call God to witness that she spoke the truth; and only implored him not to say a word about it either to Anastasia or to the boyárin.

“Thou knowest how stern he is,” she added; “he will straightway cut off the poor woman's head. But if thou hadst seen, my darling, how thy godmother laments, how restless she is! she can neither eat nor drink, and talketh in her sleep of nothing but the cross. Ay, and methinks she repeateth also the name of the accursed heretic! Of a surety, the guardian angel hath fled from my child.”

The old woman awaited Andrióusha's reply. Andrióusha was already in his godmother's chamber. Here he was met with smiles, welcomes, caresses springing from the heart; but under these roses the boy's observation plainly saw the serpent Grief. It peered out through Anastasia's every word, every gesture. He did not long remain in the chamber; with his load of sad remarks he departed to the leech, and related all. How deeply touched was Antony at the recital! He upbraided, he cursed himself, for listening to two children, for taking advantage of the weakness of an inexperienced maiden, accepting from her a present which might ruin her for ever. To restore the gift, to take a farewell kiss upon it, and to pray to God that the crucifix might arrive in time to relieve Anastasia from all pain and danger—this is what Antony hastened to do. This prayer was heard; the cross was received in time.

Anastasia was deeply agitated when she saw it. It is plain he hath not worn it! . . . she thought, and a kind of despair overwhelmed her. It had been better if her father had known of the loss of the crucifix. What would become of her? There was a time when the dwellers in heaven would not have renounced her, though the Holy Virgin herself might have looked into her heart: and now, black passions are boiling in her soul; her hands almost rejected the cross; her lips almost uttered—“Perish, then, my soul!” . . . But the guardian angel arrested her on the brink of danger: she seized the crucifix, and with tearful eyes placed it in her bosom; her godson, in broken fragments and with great caution, in order to escape the nurse's sharp eyes and ears, related his conversation with the old woman, the tormenting fears of Antony lest others might learn the loss of the precious crucifix—his fears for her health and tranquillity—Andrióusha related all—all that his friend had told him, and Anastasia could not but bless them both. She promised herself to be more cautious and more reasonable; she tried to promise to cease to love—but this she could not do. The cross passed from the bosom of the dear heretic to that of the maiden; and there, helped by Andrióusha's words, it added new fuel to the flame.

The cunning nurse, though she had heard nothing of what had passed between the god-

mother and godson, guessed that there was some secret concealed in it. These conjectures were confirmed, when, on undressing her foster-child, she saw on her breast the silver crucifix, which Anastasia took care, as if accidentally, to show. To communicate these guesses direct to the boyárin, she dared not: they might cause ill consequences to herself, to Anastasia, to Andrióusha: she might raise a conflagration beyond her skill to extinguish. She might, however, provide against future danger. To succeed in this, it was only necessary prudently and cunningly to hint to the boyárin that it was improper for Andrióusha to have free access to his godmother's chamber. He was, it was true, but fourteen years old—a mere child; and, besides, was so quiet—so well-behaved! But Andrióusha had just received the postríga by special favour of the Great Prince, Iván Vassilievitch; and the word “postríga” turned every boy's head. As he was fit for war, he could not be a mere child. Who would take the trouble to inform himself of the youth's age? Evil tongues would often hint harm which they dared not utter. The honour of a maiden ought to be like a mirror, which, though not defiled, is yet dimmed by an impure breath. As the nurse thought, so she acted. The boyárin thanked her for her sensible advice; and promised that, when Andrióusha returned from the campaign, his access to Anastasia should be interdicted, and he should be only allowed to speak to her in the presence of her father and brother. All was arranged as well as possible.

Antony himself, the cause of this family agitation—hitherto the unknown cause—determined to remove the slightest suspicion from the beautiful creature for whose honour he was ready to lay down his life. He sought no further opportunities of seeing Anastasia. On the morrow he was to set off on the expedition with the Great Prince's train; and he instantly called for his horse, and rode away from the house of the boyárin, in order to pass the night at Aristotle's; from thence start on the march, determining never more to set foot in the dwelling inhabited by Anastasia. “Time,” he thought, “reason, the impossibility of our meeting, will vanquish a passion which, perhaps, is nothing but the fancy of a maiden shut up between four walls. I will, at least, restore her to tranquillity.”

As soon as he was left alone with his own thoughts, he cast back a glance on the path which he had trod since his arrival in Russia. Wherefore had he journeyed thither? Was it not that he might devote himself to the service of science and humanity, to gain a triumph for them? And what had he performed—this priest of the beautiful and of the good? He had cured a parrot; he had dressed gallantly; had succeeded in pleasing the Great Prince, and in leading astray the heart of an inexperienced maiden. A noble, a glorious triumph! Was it worth while to come so far for this? In Italy he was at least free: but now he was the bond-slave of passion—now he could no longer hope to shake off its chains. He could never return to his native land; he had exchanged it for a foreign country: in Russia from henceforward he must live—in Russia die. To the house of a Russian boyárin, who detested him, were

linked his thoughts—his whole existence: in that house lay all the weal, all the woe, of his life. There was his fate. Such was the account to which Antony called himself respecting his actual position.

In the struggle with his passion he promised to free himself from its slavery, and to quiet the cry which arose against it from the depths of his conscience. He promised; ay! we shall see which of the two young men, nearly of the same age, will possess strength of mind enough to perform his vow—the Russian wild gallant, or the steady bachelor of Padua.

The gates of the heretic's quarter were closed and locked up. Anastasia saw this: her heart and ears greedily followed the clatter of the horse's feet as it died away in the distance; drank in the last clink of the shoes, as though the sound were the dying beat of the beloved one's pulse ere it was for ever stilled. He was gone . . . the poor girl was terrified by her loneliness: her heart died within her: it seemed to her as if father, brother, kin—all the world—abandoned her, an unhappy orphan. Oh, with what delight would she now undergo the tortures of that morning and the preceding days, but to know that *he* was there—not far from her—in the same house with her: that she might behold him, might meet his eye, and even await his returning!

An unusual noise disturbed Anastasia's reverie. The tramp of horsemen filled the neighbouring street.

“Hark! they strike the atabal!” cried the nurse, rushing to the window. “Look! a great troop is going by. See, how the soldiers' casques and breastplates glitter in the sun! And there is the voevóda at the head of his band: in his hand he beareth a shestopór adorned with precious stones. In heaven there is but one sun; but there every gem is a sun! And how young, how handsome he is! Ah! Holy Mother! it is the young prince Iván. Oh, oh! but for Helena of Vallachia thou wouldst now be a princess: the Tsar would have loved thee, and kissed thy rosy lips; and thou wouldst have been able, my dove, to cherish mine old age: I should have slept under marten skins, pillowed on swan's down, dressed in silk and sindal, and quaffed strong mead. But it was fated that the Vallachian should turn up to cloud our happiness, and to rob us of a dear bridegroom. She came hither to Russia, and brought us nothing but the Jewish heresy—she and the deacon Kouritzin; may she and the accursed deacon burn for it! Look now! the young prince Iván! if he be not grown as sad and gloomy as if he had become a widower yesterday! He mourneth for thee, my child. As he passed our house, his heart could not resist, and he looked up tenderly to thy window; and see! they bear the standard on a waggon!* Look, how it fluttereth in the breeze! Cross thyself, my child, before the image of our Saviour” . . .

The old woman very reverently made the holy sign; and Anastasia, without looking out of the window, sitting on her bed, mechanically crossed herself. The nurse continued—“The

* The great standard, like the oriflamme of France, the Scottish ensign at Bannockburn, &c., was borne on a wheel carriage.—T. B. S.

image is embroidered in gold; they say that Sophia Phomfnishna worked it with her own hands. Hey! what fair gallants! Who can tell! perhaps one of them is thy future husband . . . O, Lord! O, saints of mine! Look!—or do my old eyes deceive me! Ah, 'tis he, 'tis he, in verity! our tale-teller, Aphánasii Nikítin; his bare feet are fettered—his poor hands are fixed behind *with melted lead!*"*

In reality, they were carrying along the tale-teller, Aphánasii Nikítin, in chains, under a guard of constables. What had the poor man done? why this punishment? Thus it was: Iván Vassilievitch having been informed that he was a native of Tver, and that he knew every corner and every bush around it, ordered him with his own lips to accompany the army, and on arriving at the city to give any information that might be required of him. To this Aphánasii Nikítin answered—"The will of God is mighty in heaven, and the will of the Great Prince, Iván Vassilievitch, on earth. Let him order me to drown myself—I will drown; but against my native city, against the golden-domed cathedral of our Saviour, I will not go. Sooner will I drink mine own blood than consent to lead an army against my kinsmen and my brethren." At these words the fury of Iván Vassilievitch was awakened—"What! this is not the voevódo Prince Khólmsskii!" he cried in an angry voice: "A pedlar—a clown! Let him be put in chains, and carried to Tver whether he will or no. Since he refuseth to show us the road thither, we will show it to him, and further too!"

It was for this cause that the tale-teller, Aphánasii Nikítin, was in chains. The iron clinked as he went along the street, and the nurse began to lament. At these mournful sounds Anastasia arose. She took from her ivory coffer some small coins, and ordered the old woman to carry them to the poor prisoner. "I will take it, my dear," said the nurse, still gazing from the window, not to lose the pleasure of the spectacle. "I will take it, even if Iván Vassilievitch trampleth me under his horse's feet. Look! there is our heretic . . . what doth he there? . . . I must run, my child—I must run, not to be too late!"

Hardly had the nurse left the room ere Anastasia looked cautiously from the window, and saw that her beloved Antony had anticipated her.

In spite of his resolutions, he desired to pass once more by Obrazétz's house, to bid farewell to her dwelling, if not to her—perhaps for ever. In doing this he came up with the main guard as it was beginning its march, and caught sight of poor Aphánasii Nikítin, to whom he had been made known by Andrióusha, and who frequently had conversed with him about the life and nature of the West; and he hastened to give the prisoner's guard a handful of silver. Aphánasii Nikítin looked gratefully at the leech; but the constable turned his back upon the heretic, and the silver was scattered on the wooden road. At this moment the nurse ran up and gave her mistress's money to the constable. The latter crossed himself and received it. With shame

and mortification Antony rode away. It may be imagined with what feelings the daughter of Obrazétz looked upon this scene. All—all turned from the heretic; but she, unhappy girl! enchanted by the powers of evil, so fondly—so immeasurably loved him!

Long lay the scattered money upon the wooden road.

CHAPTER XXIN.

THE SIEGE.

"Fair and softly goeth far in a day."

Old Proverb.

THE troops made very short marches. They had not yet arrived so far as Klin, when the volunteers were already before Tver. These brave bands of irregulars, led by Khabár, spread terror around the city: at one moment they would make their appearance in the suburbs with shouts and cries, announcing storm and sack, at another they would vanish in the forests of Tver, leaving no track of their march. Khabár did not content himself with having a private conference with those citizens of Tver who were devoted to Iván, and who had previously been bought over to his interest; he was not contented with making a reconnaissance of the weak points in the enemy's fortifications; he passed the Volga, and established a communication with the army which was advancing from Nóvgorod, under the command of the lieutenant of that city. Returning to the right bank of the river, he sent a message to the Great Prince, Iván Vassilievitch, informing him that, with his bands of the volunteers of Moscow, he would undertake to make himself master of Tver. He requested the assistance of Aristotle's cannon. Thus Khabár-Símskoi, together with his comrades, continued to deserve his reputation for activity and military skill.

Iván Vassilievitch, whom in all justice we may call *the delayer*, commanded a courier to convey his *word of favour*, first to Khabár, and secondly to all the volunteers, and to inform them that *he was coming*. And he continued to advance in the same tortoise-like manner as before. For the first person who dared to murmur rather too loudly against this dilatoriness, the Great Prince of Moscow showed his favour by building him an edifice in a cross-road—an edifice composed of two upright posts and a transverse beam. Aphánasii Nikítin was prepared for the same fate. He made himself ready to die with Christian firmness; but just as they were about to tie the fatal knot, his life was spared, and he was permitted to go about his business. Whether this was done at the request of Iván the Young, or from the private impulse of the Great Prince, is unknown. However, it may be easily supposed that the Tveritchánin wandered away in the direction opposite to Tver, in order not to be a witness of the ruin and conflagration of his native city. For the road he was well provided by the generous gifts of the boyárens and common people, and by Antony he was presented with a balsam for his arms, wounded by the melted lead with which they had been fixed together. No man who encountered him ever heard him utter a word of complaint, either against the Great Prince or against his

* It is still doubted by antiquaries whether this cruel mode of confining a prisoner was actually practised, or whether it is only a technical expression for some severe method of chaining a culprit.—T. B. S.

own fate. Praying both for the Prince and for his people, but more fervently for the preservation of his native city from destruction, and praising the Lord alone, he hastened back to Moscow to finish his half-told tales.

The Great Prince of Moscow ordinarily pitched his camp in large villages. There halted with him Iván the Young, the courtiers, the chief regiment with the imperial standard, Aristotle with the fire-arms, and the inseparable Tsarévitch of Kassím, Danyár. This prince enjoyed his particular love and favour for the fidelity with which he had served Russia. In his person Iván wished clearly to prove how advantageous it would be to the Tartars to pass over under the protection of the Russian ruler. Already more than a week had passed since the troops had quitted Moscow. It was that hour of the day when the sun chases the dew and coolness of the morning. The weather was beautiful: all nature seemed to smile, and image the arrival of summer; and the rivulets, dancing in the sunbeams, all gold and flame; and the breeze, laden with fragrance from the foliage of the trees; and the billows of the eddying harvest, like the waving lines of burnished steel in the ranks of charging cavalry; and the choirs of birds singing, each in its own harmony, the praises of the Almighty. This enchanting smile, this imaging of nature, melted even the iron soul of Iván Vassílievitch. Passing the rivulet beyond the village of Tcháshnikoff, he ordered his tent to be pitched on an elevation, and commanded the troops to make a halt round. He rode up the eminence, took of his *horzn* (military mantle), and dismounted from his horse. All this was performed with the assistance of different officers of the court: the ceremonial was kept up even in the field—even in the field he desired to appear a Tsar.

"Here I would fain build myself a village," said Iván Vassílievitch, admiring the scene.

And in reality it was something to be admired.

In general, it is to be remarked, that man, from some innate tendency towards the beauties of nature—perhaps a trace of the first inhabitant of the earth—be he Tsar or peasant, loves to place his dwelling in a beautiful situation. Nothing but necessity, but force, can drive him to the arid plain, to the forest neighbouring the swamp. In the sites selected for the Russian towns, and the imperial pleasure villages, this taste is particularly observable. Iván Vassílievitch, in praising the lovely picture spread before him by the great artist, remembered his own villages, Voróbievo, Kolónienskoye Island, his Vorontzoff field, where he met the spring, and passed the summer in the delights of hawking and wandering through the gardens. While they were pitching his tent, he seated himself on a folding-chair, which was always carried with him. Around him stood Iván the Young, and several of the officers of his household. Among them might be observed the round-shouldered Tartar, who associated more familiarly than any other person with the Great Prince. This was Danyár, Tsarévitch of Kassím, the object of his singular favour.*

In front of them, at the bottom of the hill, were running Andrióusha and a lad of seventeen, the son of the Tsarévitch—Karakátcha: the one, a type of European beauty, with the stamp of the Creator's love for his creature imprinted on every lineament; the other, narrow-eyed, tawny, with high cheekbones, and the serpent-like expression of one who had crawled into the world from some foul thicket of the tropics among the reptiles, with whom he had mingled his human nature. Karakátcha had caught a dove, and was preparing to chop it in pieces with his knife; Andrióusha entered into a struggle, to save the winged prisoner: inferior to the Tartar in strength, but far more dexterous and active, he succeeded in seizing the victim in time and setting it at liberty. The momentary struggle was succeeded by a truce, concluded by the transfer of a piece of money, which seemed to give much pleasure to the Tartar Tsarévitch. Both the boys, throwing off the weight of their arms, hastened to relieve themselves of the heat which oppressed them, by bathing in the cool waters of the streamlet. Their companionship at the court of the Great Prince, whither they went, as it were, to school every day, had brought them together, and forced them to forget the difference of their faith and manners, (Karakátcha was still a Mahometan.)

"Right noble boys!" said Iván Vassílievitch, turning to the Tartar Tsarévitch and the artist; "they will be great leaders in my son's time, if God doth not grant me myself to see it."

This praise brought a glow of satisfaction on the faces of the two fathers.

"And when are we to christen thy son?" demanded the Great Prince of the Tsarévitch.

"The hour will come; there is time enough, my good Lord Iván," answered Danyár. "Thou thyself dost not hurry, yet thou dost great things."

"According to the Italian proverb, which Aristotle taught me—'fair and softly goeth far in a day.' And I do not force thee. Thy father and thou have served me faithfully, though ye were not christened. It was but for the salvation of his soul I spake of christening."

"'Tis yet but a foolish child. But if in fair field he cutteth off two Tveritchánin heads, then he will be a man; 'twill be time to christen him and find him a wife."

"Good! and I have a bride ready for him—a rare beauty! She must be of the same age as thy son."

"Who is she, my good lord?"

"The daughter of my *vocvóda* Obrazéty."

At these words a slight convulsion passed over the lips of Iván the Young—Antony blushed and turned pale. Iván Vassílievitch remarked all this.

"I will give my boy to her," said the Tsarévitch, with evident pleasure. "They say, she is a right fair damsel! she can embroider skull-caps; we will blacken her teeth—we will redder her nails—and in a twinkling she will be fit for our prophet Mahomet in Paradise."

Iván Vassílievitch laughed heartily at this criticism.

A tent was pitched for the Tsar, and a guard placed before it. Next to it they put up a church of linen, (they first spread the ground

* In many of the writings of this period we remark the great care of Danyár's interests exhibited by Iván.—*Note of the Author.*

with skins, and then with cloth, on which they erected the altar; when they took down the church, they scorched with fire the place on which it had stood.) The Great Prince retired into his tent with his son; and all the attendants separated, each to his own quarters. The road to Tver on the northern side of the camp was carefully barricaded with iron railings, and wagons, and guarded by sentinels. The troops (there were only cavalry in those days) scattered themselves over the neighbouring country, keeping the Great Prince's tent as the centre of the circle which they formed. And how were the troops quartered? What had they in the way of camp, of cantonments? They merely pitched the tent of each voevóda; beside it they placed the wagon bearing the standard of the regiment; next to this, likewise on wagons, the fire-arms, composed of matchlocks, and a cannon, if there happened to be one. The horses were allowed to range in herds over the meadows or the sown fields, as they might happen; the soldiers separated into messes around their voevódas, boiled their copper kettles, filled with a kind of soup composed of biscuit and oatmeal; sang songs, told stories, and all under the open sky, in spite of rain and snow, frost and heat. What cared they for the attacks of the elements! By nature and education they were hardened as if locked up in steel. The horses, brought from the Asiatic steppes, bore as patiently as their riders the hardest weather, and throve upon the most meagre food.

Mournful, gloomy, lay Antony in the tent of Fioraventi Aristotle. At the time of setting out on the campaign, he had striven to silence the voice of his heart in the occupations of his profession. He searched all the recesses of the forest, he plunged to the depths of the ravine; he collected there plants, some whose medical properties he already knew, others which were unknown in southern countries: the latter he was preparing as a present to the place of his education. Did he halt in a village? there, with the assistance of his servant, he made enquiries for witches and wise women, who often possessed, as he had heard from Aristotle, medical secrets, handed down from generation to generation. Some of these secrets he succeeded in obtaining, with the aid of the terrible powder of the Great Prince, or the force of gold. Thus, by returning to his learned occupations, he had placed, he thought, a strong and insurmountable barrier between himself and Anastasia, whose image still frequently pursued him. Obrazétz's prejudices, his aversion to him, his education, his country, his religion—a multitude of other obstacles which swarmed around him at the first thought of a union with her, came to the aid of science and reason, inducing him to stifle the feeling which had mastered him. But when Antony heard the name of Anastasia from the lips of an unbelieving Mahometan—that name which he pronounced with reverent love in the sanctuary of his heart—that name which was united with all that was most beautiful in earth and heaven; when he heard that Anastasia was to be given to a misbegotten Tartar—she whom he thought no one had a right to possess but himself and God—then his blood rushed backward to his

heart, and he was terrified by the idea of her belonging to another. Never yet had this thought presented itself to his mind in so dreadful a shape. Like some passionate lover of art who goes day by day to a picture-gallery to worship one particular Madonna, and who suddenly finds that it is about to be brought to the hammer; and now the immortal one is chaffered for by pedlars—worldly wretches, contemptible shopkeepers, Jews, are appraising its merits—dare even to discover faults! The amateur would give for it all that he possesses—would give himself; but he has too little, he is too poor, he cannot offer a price, and the divine work must belong to another. In his soul already resounds the cry of the auctioneer—"going, going!"—with a sinking heart he sees the fatal hammer rise. . . . In such a condition was Antony.

And wherefore did he love Anastasia? . . . He had never so much as spoken to her; and to create so ardent and profound a passion as that he felt, small is the power of mere external loveliness. Small, indeed; but in her eyes he beheld what the worshipper of art beheld in his Madonna—the loveliness of the soul; something indescribable, unintelligible; perhaps his own past existence in another world, a world before this earth; perhaps his future, his second, *I*—the personality with which he would form one in those mansions, many of which the Son of God has made ready in his Father's house. Could he break up this union, those spousals of two spirits? could he give up to another his second *I* to worldly insult? No, that must never be.

Aristotle, with a father's eye, remarked the swift flush and the unusual paleness of Antony's face, which betrayed the secret of his heart, when the Great Prince mentioned the boyárin's daughter, and he saw how some immeasurable grief was devouring him. Rendered anxious by what he beheld, he endeavoured to engage the attention of his young friend, and began to discuss with him the character of Iván.

"Yes," said the artist engineer, "'qui va piano va sano': this national proverb I translated for the Great Prince into the Russian tongue. Iván was right well pleased with it, and no wonder; 'tis a precept to which he oweth all his successes. And therefore I intend to adopt it as a motto for the medals of the great founder of Russia."

"But doth he not abuse this cautious slowness?" exclaimed Antony, challenged to the lists of argument, from which his heart was far away. "Thou toldest me that Iván, by his crafty policy, had previously prepared every thing for the destruction of Tver. It seemeth to me, to judge by circumstances, that he hath but to menace it with the terror of his name and army, in order to attain the object for which he is now losing time."

"As far as I understand his intentions, Iván is desirous that the Great Prince of Tver should fly from his capital, leaving his city a safe and uncontested spoil. The latter is expecting aid from Lithuania, and thinks that Nóvgorod, so recently subdued, will not send Iván its army. The Russian Tsar knows for a certainty, that Tver will obtain no aid from any quarter: in his iron will he hath commanded Nóvgorod to

march against the enemy, and, obedient to that will, Nóvgorod's army already stands before the walls of the monastery of the Three Children. Perhaps the Great Prince, as thou sayest, hath in reality calculated too cautiously :—I will not dispute ; he was born, not a warrior, but a politician. A slow, and I may add, penetrating policy hath always triumphed with him ; all his successes have arisen from his knowing how to await the moment most advantageous to *himself*. Apparently, even now, he dreads, or, rather, is unwilling to exchange for new, untried arms, that old trusty weapon which hath never failed him. It was well said by Stephen, hospodar of Moldavia—"I wonder at my cousin : he stayeth at home, making good cheer and sleeping quietly, and nevertheless defeateth his enemies. I am always on horseback and in the field, and yet cannot manage to protect my own country." Yes, Iván doth not bustle to and fro, doth not prance unceasingly on a war-horse ; he doth not brag of his conquests and projects, but silently, in secret, he prepareth great actions, the execution of which astonisheth other sovereigns. "Luck, good fortune!" cry his ill-wishers and they who envy him. Luck! . . . Luck may, indeed, once or twice, in the absence of genius, crown him who plays his part on an imperial stage, be he general, counsellor, or king ; but bitterly will that man be punished, who trusts to luck alone without other great qualities : No ! almost all Iván's successes may be attributed to the strength of his intellect, the firmness of his will, an active and penetrating mind, the art of preparing and profiting by circumstances. History will doubtless place him among the small number of great actors who have changed the destiny of kingdoms, and built up an edifice to last for many ages. The name of the founder of Russia will assuredly belong to Iván. And were it not for the cruelty of his character, a fault born with him, and strengthened by education and local circumstances, we might well be proud of the happiness of serving him. It is not for us, weak mortals, to prophesy his future ; old age, peevish and infirm, usually injures the powers of the intellect, and confirms the evil propensities. But, however that may be, Russia must never pronounce the name of Iván, after all he hath done for her, but with veneration. If thou wouldst seek for spots in his reign—and from them the weakness of man permits not any ruler to be exempt—stern truth will point to one, and that no slight one. This stain is not to be wiped out by the eager justification of those who are devoted to him ; it is not to be smoothed away by the persevering sophistries of future reasoners, and the vain powers of their eloquence. Ye cannot make black white."

Carried away by curiosity, Antony requested the artist to explain what was the charge on which stern truth might summon Iván before the judgment-seat of posterity. Aristotle hastened to satisfy his desire. "What were the Mongul hordes to Russia?" recommenced Aristotle. "A curse of two centuries long, which lay upon this unhappy country in all the weight of its oppression. The East, overflowing with population, was ready to pour in, with that population, the elements of barbarism, whithersoever accident might direct the flood. The an-

gels of God hastened to make Russia a bulwark to the West, where the flower of civilization was just bursting into bloom, and whither the conquerors were attracted by the hope of rich plunder ; and thus Russia became an unfortunate sacrifice for the safety of the other nations. When her destiny was fulfilled, Providence granted her, even before the reign of Iván, a period of breathing-time. To Iván was left the glory of liberating his country from the yoke that for two centuries had oppressed it. Thus it was :—Akhmet, Tsar of the Golden Horde, appeared in Russia with a numerous army. According to his custom, the Great Prince did not slumber. In the well-stored treasury of his intellect and his will, he found means by which he might be certain to repulse his terrible foe, and these means he prepared as well as possible. The enthusiasm of the people, its confidence of victory, the valour and power of the army, the unskilful calculations of Ivan's enemies, the mistakes of Akhmet himself, all united to answer for the triumph of Russia. And what was the result ? When the fatal hour arrived to strike the blow, when Akhmet himself evidently vacillated whether he should attack or defend himself, Iván's heart failed him—yes, his heart failed him, that is the right word—he began to delay, to procrastinate, to defer the attack. Yes, the decisive hour had arrived, the hour that must decide whether he was to lose the fruits of the triumphs won by intellect, or whether he was to enjoy them—whether Russia was to be free or not ; and it is precisely in such moments that we recognize the greatness of a sovereign. At a moment when he would have been his own best counsellor in pursuing great measures, when those measures were successfully, assuredly prepared, he left the army and came to Moscow, under the pretext of taking counsel with his mother, with the clergy, with the boyárens. His mother, the clergy, a majority of the boyárens, the voice of God, the voice of the nation, all urged him to fight the enemy. He did not listen to those whose counsel he had come to ask, but he did listen to the base courtiers, who knew how to profit by the weakness of their master ; their underhand counsels flattered his failing courage. Instead of confirming the people in their heart and hope, he only alarmed them by his indecision, and by marked precautions to put his own family out of danger. The enemy was still far off ; what had he to fear as to his family ? When a king goes to defend his people's rights and honour in the field, the queen must remain with the nation as a pledge of its security—at least until the last extremity, if she hath not heart enough to die with the honour of that people. Iván, on the contrary, hastened in good time to remove Sophia and his children from Moscow, far away into the northern provinces. A strange policy, if he wished to tranquillize the nation! . . . There remained in the capital, in the Monastery of the Ascension, the Great Prince's mother, a feeble old woman, and this head, already declining to the grave, served the nation as a pledge of security : in it was centred all the hope and confidence of Moscow. What would that confidence not have been, if Sophia had remained? . . . The nation expected that the

Great Prince, after the example of Donskói, would hasten to the army; but all he did was to burn the suburbs, intimating to the people by this melancholy precaution, that he would await the enemy in Moscow. His presence with the army, which was impatiently expecting to see him at its head, would have been the best assurance of victory. Instead, however, of hastening to the troops, he summoned to himself—again to counsel!—the leaders of the army, his son Iván, and the Prince Khólmiskii. And at what a time! When the latter, by his intellect, his valour, his experience, and by his glorious title of conqueror of Nóvgorod, was the chief strength of the army; when the former, beloved of Russia, was its soul. To leave their comrades at that fatal, that decisive hour, would have seemed to them a dreadful sin, for which they would have to answer before God, and both of them did their duty; both disobeyed the command of Iván. The Great Prince's flatterers blamed them; but Iván himself better understood their noble conduct and his own error—he never made them answer for their disobedience, and never punished them for it. At last he joined the army, and there he took care to remain far from the place of action. He began again to procrastinate—for what? Was it that the spirit of his army should be chilled by inaction, that it should lose its courage and hesitate? The army fled at the first movement of Akhmet. But Providence was on the side of Russia. Akhmet, thinking that the cunning Iván was leading him into an ambushade, himself fled; and when informed of the destruction of his own camp by the Tartars, left Russia altogether, in order to protect his territories. And this *good fortune*, this providential interference, Iván's counsellors attributed to his foresight, to his refined, to his treble refined calculations. But words prove nothing if they are contradicted by facts. The people with more justice glorified only the mercy of God. 'It was not arms and the wisdom of man that saved us, but the Lord of Heaven!' said the people, following their spiritual pastors, and it spoke the truth. History is not panegyric, and history will say the same. I relate this to thee, not to cloud the greatness of Iván: he is the builder up of his kingdom, and, in spite of this grievous error, will be always great in the eyes of his contemporaries and of posterity.*

"Well, hast thou done with Akhmet?" enquired some one in a sharp voice, shaking the curtain of the tent.

Aristotle, in spite of himself, shuddered and felt confused. It was the voice of the Great Prince.

The curtains of the tent opened, and Iván, showing between them his countenance, contracted by an ironic smile, continued—"I have been here a good while, but all I have heard of thy tale is, 'Iván and Akhmet, then Sophia, and then again Akhmet and Iván.' Art thou not pleasant on some of my old sins? . . . I will not conceal it; there was a time when I vacillated, hesitated, I know not how myself. Who

would believe that now! . . . To speak true, there was something to be afraid of! In one hour I might have lost all that I had taken years to arrange, and what I had projected for Russia to last for ages. The Lord delivered me. But . . . as our proverb saith—'he that bringeth up old times, out with his eyes.' Do me justice in this matter to the German. Good rest to thee, Aristotle!" With these words Iván Vassilievitch let down the curtain and disappeared, leaving the two friends in no small embarrassment.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE UNEXPECTED ESCORT.

"Lo, I bring, I bring to thee, svat, a gift,
'Tis a coffer of gold with forged arrows stored,
And a comb, a wondrous comb, double-toothed,
To equip a gallant, like a mirror it shines.
With the first fair gift the heart I will comfort,
With the second fair gift I will lay thee to rest."
Old Song.

The army of Iván inundated the environs of Tver for a distance of some dozens of versts. Its arrival was announced by a discharge of the gigantic cannon—one single discharge; but one which carried consternation to the houses and hearts of the people of Tver. The silence which succeeded was yet more terrible; it was like the momentary breathing-time which nature grants to the wretch who is lying on his death-bed. Night shrouded the city and its surrounding country with her gloom, but soon the latter sparkled with a thousand watch-fires, like the rich pall of velvet which they prepare for the illustrious dead. What did Tver during this night? What doth the unhappy woman who is preparing herself for widowhood, who is unable to snatch her beloved, her darling, from the almighty foe? What doth she but sob and beat her breast!

The morning of the following day lighted up the hundred cantonnments of the Muscovites; and the endless colonnade of smoke which arose along the plain. The monster-cannon opened in front its huge throat; suddenly, at the first ray of the sun, it seemed to yawn, and its awakening re-echoed through the suburbs of Tver; it shattered a number of huts, and crushed in one of them a whole family at once. Immediately after the giant, awoke its fierce children, and thundered out in their own language—"Wait awhile, Tver, we will give thee sorrow if thou dost not behave thyself." Thus, at least, were the sounds interpreted by the men of Tver, who ventured to look out from the farthest fortification on the camp of the enemy. They saw the German cannoniers fixing the matchlocks on their carriages and iron limbers; the soldiers weaving hurdles for the siege out of brushwood, and covering them with melted pitch; detachments armed with bows, swords, and pikes, encircling Tver in a curved line on the Moscow side. They saw all this, and spread through all the houses the terrible news. "Tver is no more," they cried through the streets; "the harvest is ripe, the reapers are ready." A black raven at the same moment proclaimed death to the city from the cross of the golden-domed cathedral of our Saviour, and from the ridge of the Great Prince's palace. Not less

* It is not, perhaps, the duty of a novelist, to indulge in a digression respecting Iván's great fault. In justification I may allege my desire to offer a tribute to Truth, which guided the pen of Karamzin in his description of Iván's error; an error defended by M. Polevoi without any historical or logical proofs.—*Note of the Author.*

bodily, the princes and boyárin's, the secret partisans of Iván Vassilievitch, scattered themselves among the people and defenders of Tver, whispering the impossibility of opposing the force of the Prince of Moscow. "Let him," they said, "make in his wrath one blow with his mighty arm, and he levelleth his foe to the earth; when he overfloweth with mercy, he is as the sun after rain." The day arrived, and they appeared before the Great Prince of Moscow with offers of submission.

Tver was already subdued without a conflict. But its Great Prince, Mikháil Borisovitch, and the boyárin's who remained faithful to him, determined still to defend themselves. They retired with their troops to the citadel, which was washed on the one side by the Volga, on the other by the Tmáka; the gates were shut, the towers bristled with arquebuses, the battlements were lined with warriors, armed, with melted pitch, with stones, with arrows. Both the fortress and its defenders were prepared to give the besiegers a bloody reception. A poor defence, when hope had departed from the defenders, and treason was whispering in their hearts the fatal word of ruin!

Iván Vassilievitch halted in the village of Kóltzova, from whence he could see Tver, as it were in a picture. Khabár presented himself before him to ask for orders. He knew that Mikháil Borisovitch, trembling for his own security, and still more for his young wife, granddaughter of the Polish king, Kazimír, was preparing on the following night to escape from the citadel. Khabár promised to seize him, and offered his own head as a gage of his success.

"What should I do with them?" asked Iván Vassilievitch: "the maintenance of my prisoners is very chargeable. Let them fly to Lithuania; traitors to Russia will still be traitors. A slice cut off thou canst not join again to the loaf by force. Let Mikháil Borisovitch go where he will, that Kazimír may know that his friend and cousin of Tver is not formidable to me. Tver, even without a hostage, is mine—I have her safe."

And on this occasion his calculations were correct. In a private conference he spoke further to Khabár; but that conference remained a secret.

Khabár had friends in every cantonment. Many and strange were the tales he told them about Tver. "With one ear I dipped in, with the other I dipped out," he said, "and I succeeded in making an obeisance in the Church of the gold-domed Saviour. The gallants of Tver had bought and sold my head; but I said to them—'Don't hurry yourselves my lads, don't fatigue yourselves in vain; I am sorry for ye; even as it is ye begin to grow lean; this hot-brained pate of mine is sold to the golden cupola of Moscow: She cannot let ye have it cheap: ye cannot afford to give the price.'"

"Now, then, tell us, didst thou make love to many of the pretty girls of Tver? Didst thou roll out many a barrel from the boyárin's cellars?" enquired the wild gallants of Moscow.

"I made love only to one pretty girl, to a thought of reforming," answered Khabár. "She whispered a word of love in my ear, and ordered me to tell ye—'We are all kin, brothers, to our holy Russia; we shall soon be united to Iván

Vassilievitch. I will come to ye, my brethren, and I will fall down at your feet; take me, my friends, into your family. I will show ye my white bosom; sow it with a little seed, with a kind word, and it shall spring up into a stately tree. If ye take off the head, weep not for the hair; be merciful, and I will be for ever your slave and sister.'"

"Let the bell-ringer ring to mass! But we are not going to play the priest, my boys!" exclaimed Khabár-Simskoi's former comrades. "Will they like us

u "With fire and smoke to cense them straight,
m Or with Kisten* to cross their pate?"

Thou art a leader of the war, and not a hermit, good Khabár. Thou hast found this fit of piety, like a cast-off gown, in some cell or other, and thou wilt wear it o' festival days; it doth not fit thee—it was not made for thee, boy: hark!—'tis gone!—and even its track hath vanished! Thy natural and gallant disposition is like the careering of the wild breeze over the plain—or the hawk that flaps her wings amain: that belongs to thee, as the shore to the sea.

*Or maiden or widow so fine, is the damsel I joy to call mine;
A kiss on her lip so divine—or, it sparkles and glows like the wine;
But the other's lip hideth a thorn, that sorrowful mistress of thine!"

Give a glance at the bright sparkling bowl, and sorrow hath fled from thy soul. Thou, Khabár, art Iván Vassilievitch's voevóda when bestriding the fiery steed; but thou art ours when thou art stretched out under the bench, at the board of the bright sunny mead."

Thus the gallants exchanged jests after the Russian fashion. Barrels of mead, the plunder of some boyárin's cellar in the neighbourhood, were temptingly abundant through the camp, and looked very affectionately at Khabár; the talk of his companions lighted up in his heart his former thirst for pleasure. But he remembered his promise to his father, his duty, and thanked his friends in a single goblet. From them he proceeded to Aristotle's tent. He had occasion to consult with him about the illumination which was to take place at night. His lively description of the gay and joyous life of the *volunteers*, inflamed the imagination of the leech and Andrióusha; both entreated the young voevóda to take them with him on a night expedition. Khabár had not forgotten the leech's services at the court of Paleologos, and loved him in spite of himself, notwithstanding his being a heretic. In the goodness of his heart, Obrazétz's son was ready to serve him to the utmost of his power. He consented to take them into his band; on the condition, however, that Antony should wear the dress of the Russians, and have his hair cut after their fashion. This request flattered Antony's heart: *she* would hear of this transformation, *she* would see him in the Russian dress, thought the young man, a child in heart—and he himself offered the scissors to Khabár. Down fell the ringlets of his bright and flowing locks at the feet of the voevóda; in a few seconds the German leech was metamorphosed into a handsome Russian gal-

* Kisten, a weapon much used by the ancient Russians. It consisted of a ball of iron, (sometimes spiked,) attached to a short rope or thong.—T. B. S.

tant. An equipment was soon found; helmet, cuirass, and broadsword. The military trappings became him as well as if he had worn them from his infancy; it was evident that he was born for the profession of arms, and that destiny had erred in devoting him to another calling.

"Thou takest with thee both my sons," said the engineer to Khabár, when he communicated the Great Prince's permission to the children to volunteer; "look that thou keepest them like thine own brethren."

When he bade them farewell, he presented each of them with a number of iron balls filled with gunpowder—as many as they could take, explaining the method of preserving and employing them. He had only just invented them, and called them playthings. These balls were destined to play a terrible part in the imagination of our ancestors, who beheld the devil in all kinds of instruments which exceeded their comprehension; by comparing them with the grenades of our own times, we may form some idea of the tremendous effects attributed to them.

Whoever has visited the Zéltikoff monastery, by the road which runs along the Tmáka, must have doubtless stopped more than once to admire the picturesque windings of the river. The traveller is not struck here by wild, grand views, recalling the poetic confusion of the elements in some dreadful confusion of the world: he will find here no huge rocks—those steps by which the Titans marched to the conflict with heaven, and from which they fell, casting away in the unequal fight fragments of their arms, which even yet terrify the imagination: he will not behold here traces of the deluge, hardened as when it rushed from the bowels of the earth; the secular oak, that Ossian of the forest, chanting, in the hour of the tempest, the victory of heaven over earth; he will not hear the bellowing of the cataract, thundering from afar, that eternal echo of those blaspheming shouts which clove the ear of nature, in the wrestling of creation with its Maker. No, he will not be struck here with this wild and sublime picture. A modest rivulet, as if not daring to sport; the calm ripple of its waters, the subdued clatter of a mill; banks which, after leaving the road for a while, soon return to it, and then wind away from it again; a meadow stretching away into thickets; a dark pine forest, now sighing like a hermit after heaven, now murmuring as it were a prayer to itself, now chanting a low sweet melody, like a psalmist in profound thought, who runs over the golden strings of his dulcimer; in front two monasteries, around deep loneliness—all along his path reminds him that he is going towards a religious habitation.

It was exactly here, close to the road which leads along the rivulet of Tmáka, that there stood, at the time of which we write, a small mill, (on the very same spot where there is one at this day.) The wheels were silent. The Tveritchánins and common people of the neighbourhood, occupied with the agitations of war, were not busy in their daily labour—it was no time to grind flour when the fate of the whole land was hanging in the scales of destiny. It was eventide, and, therefore, the sole inhabitants of the miller's cottage, its master, a white-

headed old man, and a boy of twelve years old, his adopted son, a dumb child, had lain down to rest. The stillness of their solitude was only broken by the prattle of the rivulet, which, as if complaining of its confinement, wept here and there through the mill-race. Suddenly the boy started up to listen, waved his hand, and uttered an inarticulate cry. The dumb boy's hearing was extraordinarily acute; his plaintive cry always gave faithful intelligence of the approach of a visitor or passer-by. And now this prediction, inducing the old man to look out of the window, was speedily confirmed. The noise of horsemen was heard. The miller lighted a splinter of pine, and its glare, falling from the window on the left bank of the rivulet, fitfully illuminated a crowd of cavaliers. One of them dismounted from his horse, and requested the miller in a subdued voice, as not daring to make himself heard too loudly, to show him the road across the mill-dam. The request was obeyed without hesitation, and the horsemen, of whom the miller counted about a hundred, passed over the mill-dam, and spread themselves on the right bank of the Tmáka. Marshes, and the ditches which had been dug between them, protected the troop from any enemy's attack. The horsemen remaining on the left bank, (perhaps there were twenty,) crowded into the courtyard of the mill, and into the cottage itself. This was the band of Tver, which the Prince Mikhail Khólskii, (a kinsman of the Muscovite voevóda, the Prince Daniel Dmitrievitch,) one of the most faithful servants of his lord, had assembled almost by force, and detached hither. The soldiers who composed it marched as it were in a funeral procession; and no wonder—they were arrayed not to defend their sovereign in his capital, over the graves of his crowned forefathers, beneath the shadow of the golden-domed Saviour, but to escort a man who had ceased to be their sovereign, and who had, of his own free-will, without a struggle, left them at the mercy of another, already victorious by the terror of his name alone. Without bidding farewell for ever to his subjects, by night, like a thief, depriving them of their Great Prince, and of all the sanctity comprehended in that name, he was about to fly, a cowardly exile, to Lithuania, a country immemorially the enemy of their own. Did not this shameless flight release them from their allegiance? This thought alone was enough to destroy their courage. With it were mingled the inducements and the bribes of Iván's partisans; the rumours of the favour with which the rich and powerful Great Prince of Moscow, who must sooner or later be their master, overwhelmed those who would set the example of going over to his side; and the rumours, too, of the punishment which would fall on those whose obstinacy would delay their desertion too long. An hour had not passed before the greater part of them, one after another, under various prettexts, skulked away behind the bushes, directed their horses' heads along the left bank of the rivulet, and crossing it at a convenient place, betook themselves to the Muscovite camp. This they had only thus long delayed to do, from the impossibility of deserting from the town without danger. Only about a dozen brave men, remaining among the bushes, refused to betray their

duty. And for this there was an important reason—sleep had overcome them. They had yielded themselves up to it, trumpeting the praises of Prince Mikháil Borisovitch and Iván Vassilievitch without distinction, as they appeared in their dreams. The chief of this band suspected nothing of what was going on. He was quietly seated in the cottage, addressing his conversation alternately to the miller, to the centurion and captain of ten, who were with him, or who were listening. At midnight he expected the agreed-on signal from the road to Stáritza.

"Who is that? thy son!" he asked the miller, pointing to the boy.

"My adopted son, fair sir. 'Twill be three years, come the Fast of Assumption, since I found him in the woods of the monastery. He hath never uttered a word—it is clear the Wood Spirit hath passed over him. From that day he hath been as dumb as a fish. We have not discovered either his family or kin; so I, ye see, became a father to him."

Then began tales, among the warriors of Tver, about various dumb people, who had become so from the Wood Spirit's having passed over them.

"But how doth the Wood-demon agree with thy House-spirit?" asked the chief again.

"It would be sinful to say that I have reason to complain of him, though he hath no reason either to use us ill: we take care of his dwelling in the woods, and we never insult him."

"Perhaps, then, he hath visited thee, grandfather?"

"And he hath done that too, fair sir."

"Did he come himself, or didst thou invite him? Didst thou regale him with cake or crab-stick?" laughingly asked one of the captains, a free-thinker, an *esprit-fort*, of those times, who was sitting close to the window.

"Just not about him, boyárin; if thou shout in wood or plain, crack! he will reply again," answered the miller.

At this moment somebody scratched loudly at the window, and the captain fancied he had heard a thousand footsteps in the forest.

At these sounds the brave warrior felt "goose-skin" creeping all over him.

"Look," cried the chief, bursting into a loud laugh, "the centurion hath changed countenance; he is frightened at a cat!"

"Thou wouldst not be our chief if thou wert not braver than we," answered the captain angrily, retiring from the window.

"Now, then, old fellow," said the chief, turning to the miller, "untruss; tell us how the Wood-spirit came to see thee."

"Assuredly; if it will give pleasure to you, my lord. It was the summer before last, about the feast of St. Nikolai of the Winter, in the night-time, as it might be now—may I speak it in a good hour, and hold my tongue in an evil one! The frost was fierce, it raged like a famished beast; ye could not put your nose out of doors, so sharply would it nip it in its claws; my cottage groaned and creaked, as if some one was laying on to its ribs with an oaken cudgel. About an hour's space passed, and then it lulled a little. All about rose up the whirlwinds, groaning, swirling, twirling like a spindle, or as when a troop of horse are galloping and chasing one

another, or when a spinner turns the spindle—you could not tell whether the snow was falling from heaven, or whirling up from earth—you could not see a speck of God's creation. My son was asleep, but I could not sleep—I expected every moment that the roof would be torn off, and that we should be carried away, body and goods. I lighted myself a pine splinter, but my heart kept on beating. All of a sudden, I hear something behind me breathing chill on me. I felt a kind of cold air; I look, and I see before me a tall white-headed old man, with his hair all dishevelled, like a pine, a beard down to his knees, as large as a good armful of combed flax, as white as one of us when we have been grinding flour two days and nights running; his eyes were grey, and seemed to look one through; he wore a fur gown with the hair outwards.

"'Twould be a sin to deny that my tongue clove to the roof of my mouth; my feet felt as if they were nailed to the ground. 'Fear nothing,' he said, 'I have come to warm myself; ever since I have made the forest grow, I never saw such weather.' And he began to warm himself at the stove, spreading out his bony fingers. When he had thawed himself a-while, he prepared to go back to his place. 'I thank thee,' he said—'never will I forget thy kindness.' From that time, my good lord, I have never seen him again. But the Wood-spirit hath kept his word. The husbandmen that bring their corn to me to be ground, never have done praising a good man who meeteth them in the forest in bad weather, and guideth them to me: if a man's nag is knocked up, he just lays his hand on their sledge, and it goes on of itself as they had harnessed a five-year-old to it. And the little roads that lead to my house, are always as level and smooth as the first snow-roads, and" . . .

A distant groan was heard, and then it was repeated.

"Is it not our sentinels on the high-road that are calling us?" asked the chief.

"They would have sent a picket," said the captain.

"Look out of the window."

The captain was ashamed to refuse. With a presentiment of some evil he drew back the sliding window, and instantly started away from it with a shout of terror. Not he alone, but many of the soldiers—the chief himself—saw sparks spreading before the window, and glaring upon them a hoary old man, with a long white beard.

Nobody dared to stir. The window remained open. Two or three moments passed, and again appeared the old man's face. This time he cried, in a hoarse voice—"Get ye gone from hence, over the mill-dam. Enter not my forest; or your very bones shall never be gathered."

And he vanished.

Trembling seized the warriors: they seemed to dread to look at one another; much less could they stir from their places, so completely had the Wood-spirit frightened them. They sat upon the benches, neither alive nor dead.

Immediately afterward there appeared a ball of fire, rolling over and over, and crackling like the laughter of an hundred witches at their Sabbath. It seemed as if the trees of the forest were crushed. Then a crash was heard that

made the walls quake; a splinter flew from the window and wounded one of the soldiers in the face. All immediately threw themselves out of the cottage on all fours; upsetting each other, shoving, and crowding, they rushed into the court where their horses were; tumbling over their comrades who were sleeping in the yard, and who, frightened out of their wits by this rough awakening from their sleep, rushed hither and thither, seizing the first horse that came to hand, mounting anyhow, by head or tail. The frightened steeds darted out of the court-yard to the mill-dam, into the forest, or tumbled with a loud splash into the water; their masters, crowding over the dam, and shoving against each other, fell in also. The uproar was tremendous. The band posted on the right bank of the rivulet in the underwood was also struck with panic. Not knowing what was the matter, they galloped along the mill-dam, capsizing those they met, and cutting at each other or the air. And again the Wood-demon glared with his fiery eyes, now in one place, now in another; again the ball of fire rolled along, wounding and killing the fliers. The infernal laugh resounded behind them, and was repeated along the water and through the forest by a hundred echoes. In a few minutes, out of the whole band which was to have escorted the Great Prince of Tver, there remained in the mill and its vicinity, to a distance of some hundred fathoms round, only about a dozen wounded or killed, drowned in the river or buried in the swamp. The rest had all galloped off full speed straight to the Great Prince of Moscow. In the course of their flight they saw in different quarters of Tver fiery tongues begin to gleam, and flit along the roofs: they heard the thunder of the cannon resounding louder and louder through the suburbs, and the beating of the kettle-drums. Soon, mingling with this dirge of Tver, arose the cries of the besiegers and the groans of the inhabitants.

Silence again sank down around the cottage. But the miller, almost frightened out of his senses by all that he had seen and heard, stood, neither dead nor alive, still on the same spot, in the middle of his hut, muttering a prayer. In this attitude he was found by fresh guests. These were two armed gallants; they bore in triumph on their arms a little Wood-spirit, and seated him on a bench. Then such a fit of laughter began among them, that they were forced to hold their sides.

"Well, much thanks, father; thou hast helped us," said the little Wood-demon.

The old man comprehended nothing of this apparition, and knew not what to answer.

"Well done the brave army of Tver!" exclaimed one of the new-comers; "it ran away from a horse's tail."

Then Andriúsha (for it was really he, disguised with some white tails, which they had cut off from two horses for the nonce, and hastily twisted round his chin and head)—then Andriúsha took off the attributes of the Wood-demon, and appeared before the miller in his real form. These unexpected guests were soon joined by several dozens of Khabár-Simskoi's brave band, and then began the tales of the manner in which this strange victory had been won. Having laughed their fill, and having

recompensed the miller with the horses that were left in the court, for damage done to his cottage and for the future burial of the killed, the volunteers hastened to another piece of business. Andriúsha, and the two soldiers to whose care he was confided, were dispatched to Khabár to report the success of their attempt: those who remained joined the troops, which were posted about the forest in such a manner, that, at the first signal, they could concentrate themselves on any point that signal might indicate.

In the mean time Khabár Símskoi, with the leech Antony, and some dozen soldiers, was employed on another service. They had taken prisoners two small pickets, which were posted at the exit from the suburb beyond the Tmáka, rather nearer to the pine forest, and had given them over to an ambush composed of some of the volunteers, by whom they were conducted in turn to the Zéltikoff monastery. When the voevóda was convinced, by these attempts to make a sortie, and by the information of Andriúsha, that the Muscovite troop had no danger to apprehend in the direction of the suburbs beyond the Tmáka, he posted a picket of a small number of his cavaliers at the very same spot, close to the exit from the suburb, on which the defeated Tveritchanins had been stationed. From thence he detached a party of his cavalry along the Tmaka on one side, and along the Volga on the other. It was impossible for the fish to slip by. They awaited a good haul.

"They are coming," said Andriúsha, whose daring, which it was impossible to restrain, had carried him closer to the suburb: "I was the first to hear them; tell my father of this, and Ivan Vassilievitch."

And in reality the gallop of cavalry was soon distinguished, and speedily a number of horsemen appeared through the darkness, and came up in a line with Khabár.

"Who goes there?" he cried.

"Friends," boldly replied one of the horsemen.

"And ye?" enquired a tremulous voice.

"Thine escort, my lord," answered Khabár, guessing that this was the voice of the Great Prince of Tver, a feeble old man; then he whistled shrilly.

At this signal, the cordon which had been formed, closed round him in a few moments. The darkness did not permit faces to be distinguished.

"Come closer to me, my lord," said Khabár;

"by my side thy path will be clear."

The Great Prince Mikhail Borisovitch advanced from among his attendants, and rode close up to Khabár, followed by another person on horseback. "For the love of God, take care of my Princess," he said. "O, Lord! forgive me my sins!"

"Be thou not disquieted about me," exclaimed a gay female voice. Antony closed up to the side of the Princess. In this manner the precious pledge was under the swords of two powerful gallants, either of whom, in case of need, was a match for two opponents. The Great Prince's attendants were surrounded by Khabár's band. Khólmiskii, suspecting nothing, rode a few paces behind. He was less anxious about his position than disquieted by the thought of flying from the city; and stopped from time to time to listen whether they were pursued.

The body was put in motion ; it proceeded in silence. The stillness was only broken by Mikhail Borisovitch, who ever and anon entreated them to go gently, and give him time to breathe and make a piteous prayer.

They had just begun to approach the wood, when cannon thundered in the direction of Moscow, the sound of kettle-drums was heard in the city, and the suburbs began to grow visible.

Mikhail Borisovitch's horse stumbled, but Khabar succeeded in catching the rein, held it up, and thus saved the Prince from a fall.

Objects began to start out from the gloom.

The Great Prince glanced at his fellow-traveller, glanced at the fellow-traveller of the Princess, and again at his own. The features were unknown to him, both with swords drawn ; his attendants were surrounded by strangers ! He was confounded : a deathlike paleness overspread his cheeks ; the unfortunate old man felt about to faint, and reined in his horse. The young Princess, suspecting nothing, gazed with a kind of childish coquettishness at her handsome squire. She was in man's attire—a prettier boy was never seen ; but the fair Lithuanian knew how to betray, and skilfully, too, that she was a woman.

To Khólmenskii all this terrible by-play was now explained—his master was a prisoner.

"We are betrayed !" he cried ; "friends, let us rescue our Great Prince, or die with him !"

At this explanation the attendants drew their swords, and were about to cut their way out of the net in which they were involved.

Khabar whistled, and the forest seemed alive with hundreds of soldiers. "Be not rash, Prince, if thou lovest the welfare and the life of thy sovereign," he shouted, seizing the reign of Mikhail Borisovitch's horse. "Spill not blood in vain : preserve his head—one blow and it shall fall !"

Again he whistled, and another troop advanced from the pine-wood.

"Thou see'st, thy men are prisoners ; mine start up in thousands, if need be. The troop of Tveritchanins, which thou sentest to the mill, is all driven away, and hath already yielded to our Great Prince. Neither now nor hereafter hath Mikhail Borisovitch any thing to look for from Tver. Know, that the Muscovites can gain glory and honour for their sovereign ; and, if need be, that they can escort even a stranger prince in all honour."

What could be done by a handful against an overwhelming force ? The last defenders of the Great Prince lowered their weapons. Prince Khólmenskii now began to propose conditions.

Khabar turned to the Great Prince of Tver.—"Time is precious for thee and for Tver, once thine, Mikhail Borisovitch," said the voevoda. "Thou see'st how the city is blazing. This is a flash from the wrathful eyes of Ivan Vassilievitch ; it will consume the houses of God, the dwellings of rich and poor. Thou alone can quench that flame. The Tveritchanins were once thy children : how canst thou be their father, if, in leaving them, thou desirest their curses, and not their blessings for thy memory ? Hearst thou their cry ? . . . They pray to thee at parting—'tis for mercy ; save their dwellings, wives, children—save them from unmerited blood and fire. Instead of these flames that run along the roofs, leave words of mercy, like tapers before the image of our Lord."

At the commencement of these arguments terror and indecision were imaged in the face of Mikhail Borisovitch ; at length his heart was touched, and he said—"What am I to do ? instruct me."

"This. Send instantly, with my courier, the Prince Khólmenskii to Tver, and command him without delay, in thy name, to open the gates of the city to the Great Prince of Moscow, Ivan Vassilievitch, and to make submission on the part of Tver, to him as to its lawful sovereign."

"With whom, then, am I and the Princess to remain ?" enquired the timid old man.

"From us thou hast nothing to fear. We have not come to lead the Prince of Tver into captivity, but to conduct with honour Mikhail Borisovitch, cousin of the Great Prince of Moscow. Our lord hath already enough princes in his prisons : Ivan Vassilievitch commanded me to tell thee this. My young men, cloth-workers and silk-merchants of Moscow, will conduct thee to the first station, and to the second if thou wish. Select thyself the escort, as many as thou wilt. For a single hair of thine they shall answer with their heads. This I swear to thee by the Most Holy Mother of God and the merciful Saviour."

Here he crossed himself.

"If thou dost not trust me, I am Khabár-Simskoi. I will yield me unarmed as a hostage to the Prince Khólmenskii."

"For Khabár I will answer," said Khólmenskii.

Who is there that, in the place of the Great Prince of Tver—childless, hopeless, surrounded by treachery, in his old age—would not have consented to the proposition of the Muscovite voevoda ?

Doffing his bonnet and skull-cap, and thrice signing himself with the cross, the old man, in view of the conflagration of his capital, yielded up the cathedral of the Holy Saviour and the principality of Tver to the ruler of All Russia. Sadly touching were his words, like the last injunctions of a dying man. Tears streamed down his pale, feeble face, and more than once he was interrupted by his sobs.

When you ride past the pine forest of Zéltikoff, remember that this abdication was performed under its darksome shade.

"If I had possessed many servants like thee," said Mikhail Borisovitch, as he embraced Khabár at parting, "Tver would yet have been mine."

The Lithuanian girl turned her head aside, not to show the tears which fell from her eyes as she extended her hand to Khabár in sign of good-will. The young man, however, refused to kiss her hand, and said haughtily—"Pardon me, I may not kiss the hand of a foreign sovereign."

The Princess blushed deeply, and the arches of her black brows were bent in displeasure.

"But I may kiss that pretty hand !" exclaimed Andriónsha, dismounting from his horse and taking off his helmet.

The white hand was given to him with delight, and the lady embraced the handsome boy-warrior.

"Who is to escort us ?" said the Princess, bending on Antony her eyes, sparkling with lively satisfaction.

Khabár hastened to select a sufficient number

of volunteers, who were ordered to guard the late ruler of Tver to the first station; he himself hurried off with Khólmenskii to the city, in order to stop the spreading of the flames and useless bloodshed. Antony accompanied him: it was time for him to be performing his duties as a leech, (this he had almost forgotten.) He was extremely glad to be rescued from the seducing eyes of Kazimir's grand-daughter, whose brightness, if not dangerous, was at least likely to disturb his tranquillity. In his place, the indefatigable Andriúsha begged to be chosen one of the escort. The consequence was, that at the first halt in the woods, the knees of the beautiful Lithuanian served him as a pillow: wearied out, he slumbered on them, as in the lap of his mother, a deep, an angel's slumber; and the warm, melting kiss of his fair nurse, disturbed not his pure visions.

The next day the Princess and the Prince begged Andriúsha to accompany them some dozen versts further. He consented. The Prince travelled in a waggon which had been dispatched to meet him from the first station; the Princess rode with Andriúsha on horseback. Lovely children—surely brother and sister!—you would have said, observing them romping together, racing with each other, and stopping in the woods to hear the singing of the birds. The grand-daughter of Kazimir forgot the crown she had lost, and seemed to revel in her freedom, like a bird just let out of a golden cage. At Tver she had been confined by the seclusion of a palace; every thing there was so strange to her! In Lithuania she would meet her mother, her friends, her kinsmen—a life of liberty. This thought delighted her, for she was young and lively; still a guest at the feast of life.

When Andriúsha bade farewell to the exiles, they invited him to accompany them to Lithuania. "No," he said, "I cannot; I am a Russian!"

The remainder of the tale how Tver was subdued, I will finish in the words of the historian. "Then the bishop, the prince Mikháila Khólmenskii, and other princes, boyarins, and citizens of the land, having preserved to the end their fidelity to their lawful sovereign, opened the gates of the city to Ivan, came forth and saluted him as the supreme monarch of Russia. The Great Prince sent his boyarins and deacons to receive the allegiance of the inhabitants, commanded that the dead should be buried . . . and entered Tver, heard mass in the cathedral of the Transfiguration, and solemnly proclaimed that he gave the principality to his son, Ivan Ivanovitch, left him there, and returned to Moscow. In a short time he sent his boyarins to Tver, to Staritza, Zoubtzi, Opoki, Klin, Kholm, Novgorodok, to inscribe all the lands, and divide them into ploughgates for the payment of the taxes of the crown. So rapidly vanished the famous state of Tver, which, from the time of St. Mikhail Yaroslavitch, had borne the title of the great principality, and had long struggled with Moscow itself for supremacy."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE MANDRAKE.

"Plunged in a languageless foreboding,
Leaving his comrades far behind,
Into that lonely land he hurried,
And prick'd through forests drear and blind,
In thoughts of woe and vengeance buried.—
And prompting aye his soul to ill,
A demon voice around him flutter'd,
'My sword shall burst that bar—I'll kill!'—
Ever that dark Knight inly mutter'd."

PÖUSHKIN—Rouslan and Liudmila.

We have seen, in our tale, two opposed parties—that of the boyárin Mamón against the family of Obrazétz, and that of the knight Poppel against the leech Ehrenstein; I will not mention the secret inimical proceedings of the father against the son, so revolting to the feelings. The one was inspired with the means of mischief, by the very demon of evil and hate; the others, fulfilling their duty, repulsed them with strength and generosity of heart. Hitherto the first had succeeded in nothing, if we except the heretical demon which Mamón had placed in the house of Obrazétz to injure him, and afflict the daughter he so tenderly loved. They took advantage of the absence of the Great Prince, and of their chief opponents, to seek out new and more sure weapons with infernal ingenuity. All expedients were tried over in a heart and intellect inventive of evil; and some are born with a genius even for this. Revenge of slighted love added to this party a third character, the widow Selinova. From a victim she had become a sacrificer, edged the knife for Khabar's ruin, and mingled the poison to destroy him. Among them circulates the everlasting Interpreter, ready to curry favour with friend and foe, ready to do a service even to his enemy, so long as he could be serving somebody. All who surrounded Antony and Anastasia were busied in intrigues: while they, simple and innocent, suspected nothing, saw nothing, heard not the menaces of the demon.

Bartholomew did not delay to bring together Poppel and Mamón. The harebrained frivolous knight, and the wicked boyarin, soon came to an understanding. The latter had need of the knight, and took care to flatter his vanity by peculiar marks of respect, and skilful expressions of a desire to please him. The German needed some object on which to support his vanity, and was well pleased to find that support on the shoulders of a boyarin, a confidential servant of Ivan. And the secret and mutual attraction between such similar souls—what is their connexion but a strong amalgam! Gold can only be united with an impure metal by the employment of another noble metal, and then it is not difficult for the refiner to unite two substances of the same species. The difference between them consists only in the heaviness of the one and the lightness of the other. Once united, they present a single impure whole, and the point of junction is imperceptible, though that junction is the work of an unskilful artificer.

"What did Mamón want with the knight?"

Our readers remember, that the boyarin was preparing himself for the ordeal by battle with his deadly foe. He knew that the foreigners were more skilful in the use of arms, (a fact which had been recently proved by a certain

Lithuanian, who had defeated in the lists a celebrated Russian champion solely by his dexterity, wherefore Ivan Vassilievitch, from that time, had strictly forbidden the Russians to fight with foreigners; he had heard that in the suite of the ambassador there happened to be a master of this art, and he conceived an irrepensible desire to take lessons of him. This could by no means be done without Poppel's permission. Being introduced to him by the translator, the knight gave with willingness not only this permission, but himself—a celebrated master of the art of fence, as he boasted—offered to perfect him in the science of wielding the sword. "The son of Obrazétz must fall," he said. But how so? might have been enquired; why, you do not know, even by sight. "How so?" he would have answered; "how so? . . . I wish Mamón to be victorious . . . I have said that the other shall fall, and fall he shall. Now, ye shall see." It is true there are such blockheads; there are also cases in which for such words as these, spoken thoughtlessly, and afterwards kept by strength and cunning, the unhappy are innocently ruined, involved in snares on all sides—and with them fall for ever their honour and their fame.

At first the noble knight seconded Mamón from desire to benefit him, and to injure a man of whom he knew nothing; and then he was confirmed in his desire to serve his new acquaintance, by recognizing in his opponent a young man with military talents, who had done good service to his country. To the envious it always appears that the shadow of a great man may fall upon him and obscure him from the eyes of the multitude, though they may be journeying in different paths; and then he invariably thinks that the multitude have nothing else to do but to admire his greatness. Down with the lofty man, and the sooner the better! . . . At last, from that idea, which was the motive for the knight's zeal for Mamón, he advanced to the desire of injuring Khabar in order to benefit himself. He promised to assist his friend's vengeance; in exchange, the noble, grateful Mamón, learning that the leech Antony was an obstacle to the German's welfare, promised to sweep away that trifling impediment if he came off victorious in the lists. And the simple creature who had formed their connexion, the universal flatterer Bartholoméw, could not have imagined that he would have been the ground on which such splendid designs were to be embroidered.

Mamón did not rest contented with the ordinary means of man in order to destroy his foe: he sought others in the supernatural world; he had recourse even to the Fiend. He had heard that the adepts of the Jewish heresy, which had its nest at Moscow, were in possession of cabalistic or necromantic secrets, by which they could perform wonders, and determined on having recourse to the power of these enchanters.

We have already said that the philosophical curiosity of the fifteenth century, which was now reaching its close, had agitated nearly every population of Europe. Its services were innumerable; who knows them not? But that spirit of experimental enquiry was not contented with immortalizing thought, with liberating it from the slavery of antiquity, from the power

of Popery; bestowing on man an unsleeping pilot over the ocean, and bringing down the thunderbolt from heaven; not contented with giving the human race a new world on its own planet;—no, this all-devouring curiosity desired to gain a still further victory over heaven, to steal from it a secret, hitherto accessible to no man, and to no century. This contagion had unavoidably extended itself to Russia, through the medium of diplomatic relations, the natural connexion with one of the western courts, and through the seekers of profit and adventure. Under the forms of the Jewish heresy it had actually communicated itself to our country. At first Kieff had caught it from the Hebrew Skharia, "a man right cunning of mind, sharp of tongue; then Nóvgorod from him also; thence victory transferred it to Moscow. Now, fresh seeds of these opinions were brought in by the suite of Helena, daughter of Stephan the Great, (as he was styled among us, *voevóda* of Vallachia.) "This misfortune came first out of the land of Hungarie," says the annalist. The deacon Kourítzin, wise, acute, but carried away by a blind and simple love for science, took to his heart this contagion in Hungary, and disseminated it as far as he could. On this occasion, "on the wise man," as the proverb hath it, "came the simplicity of the child;" and only on this occasion the diplomatic services he had rendered to Ivan III., worthily appreciated as they were, were a pledge of his dexterous and penetrating intellect. And we must repeat, that the cause of this simple confidence was that very love of knowledge, that insatiable curiosity, which mastered not only the solitary men of genius, but even the coarse masses of the fifteenth century. Skharia boasted of his knowledge of the cabalistic art. It pretended to solve the enigmas of life and death; the thirst for explaining these mysteries tormented the wise deacon, and therefore he plunged headlong into this chaos, taking for his guide the cunning Jew. The powerful example of the deacon, that of the wife of Ivan the Young, Helena, who was infatuated by the lying science, the dexterity and cunning of the missionaries—credulity, sense, and folly—all united at length in maintaining the Jewish heresy, which had threatened, at Nóvgorod and Moscow, to shake the corner-stone of our well-being. Clergy and women, princes and mob, rich and poor, crowded in multitudes to the synagogue, notwithstanding the warnings and even the anathemas of their ecclesiastical pastors, really zealous for the salvation of souls. So strong was the contagion that even the head of the Muscovite church, the primate Zozima, took a lively interest in it. In his palace there not unfrequently took place assemblies of the heretics. "We have seen," writes Tosif of Vólok, "the child of Satan on the throne of God's saints, Peter and Alexei; we have seen the ravening wolf in the clothing of the peaceful shepherd." The Great Prince looked on the heresy as a matter of philosophy, of love of knowledge, so natural to man. That it had no dangerous object he was satisfactorily assured by those about him, themselves either members of the secret association, or bribed over to their interests; but more than all by his favourite, Kourítzin, who had given him so many proofs of de-

votion and fidelity. The matter was so craftily managed that Ivan Vassilievitch, with all his far-sightedness, never so much as suspected the contrary. We must add, too, that a degree of toleration, rare in that period, glittered, the chief gem in the crown of this man of genius. This, together with a decided spirit of despotism, which purposely went against the popular current, undeniably, sometimes stupidly, obstinate against his useful innovations, was the cause why the Great Prince remained deaf to all the representations of the clergy, respecting the necessity of inflicting an exemplary punishment on the heretics.

Antony had been conveyed to Moscow by the Jew. Could the young bachelor have imagined that he should be carried to the capital of Russia by the founder of a sect in that country? His driver was no less a person than Skharía. He had not failed, it is true, to remark in him, during his journey, an unusual intellect, a seductive eloquence, chemical knowledge, and a striking love of science; but the Jew's cunning succeeded so perfectly in confusing all this, that frequently the most sensible conversation was followed by the most absurd questions and observations, which at first confounded Antony's guesses. Never, during the whole journey, did the Hebrew, even by an insinuation, seek to shake in the young man the foundations of his religious belief. He perceived that he had met with an intellect clear and firm, naturally logical, and tempered in the forge of science. As yet Antony had never experienced love; love, for which, as all the world knows, even Hercules spun at the distaff, Richelieu wore motley, &c. &c.: was it then surprising that our bachelor should lose in Russia all the logic given him by God, and perfected in the schools? But at that time, *i. e.* on the journey to Moscow, his intellect, like some mighty athlete, was ready to start up in complete armour, whatever were the direction, and whatever the force, of the attack. And therefore the crafty Hebrew, in religious matters, confined himself to a defensive attitude against Antony; but he compensated for this silence in another way. He took advantage of the long journey, to obtain from the Paduan bachelor various facts in chemistry, with which the latter had enriched himself.—“Assuredly, the cunning rascal wishes to play the magician in Russia!” said Antony to himself, as he reviewed in his own mind all his proceedings and conversations. In his conductor he had never suspected the existence of the head of a sect. And when arrived at Moscow, Skharía never attempted to introduce Antony among his adepts; he feared even then that the force of logical conclusions, and his inspired eloquence, would ruin the edifice which he had constructed on so slight a scaffolding; and though the young bachelor did become acquainted with Kourítzin, their conversations were always confined to natural science alone. Skharía had so dexterously put the latter on his guard respecting religious subjects, that he—fearing the young man's indiscretion, natural at his age, and dangerous from his position, so near the Great Prince's person—never so much as spoke to Antony on religious questions. To this was limited, externally at least, the intercourse between the leech and the head of the

heretical sect, as well as its protector in Russia. Never once had Skharía visited Antony, never once had he even sent to him; a feeling of gratitude, delicate and cautious, prevented him from affording even ground for suspicion that the leech was acquainted with a Jew. Had not the heretic—even as it was—a sufficient reputation for witchcraft and necromancy? What would have been the consequence, if he were observed carrying on an intercourse with the enemy of Christ? For the heart of the despised Jew preserved the memory of the young bachelor's benefits, like a holy commandment. That heart laid strict orders on Kourítzin to protect him, to guard him like the apple of his eye, like a beloved child of his own—to inspire the Great Prince with every good feeling towards him—to assist him, in case of need, with money, with the power of his influence, with fire and sword, how he pleased, so as to protect the beloved head from the storms of life. It was that heart which obtained, from agents at the Emperor's court, and in the suite of Poppel himself, information as to the dangers which menaced the Baron Ehrenstein's son, and he commanded the deacon to keep a strict watch over his safety; and the deacon, the obedient disciple of Skharía, performed with the greatest punctuality and zeal the command of his instructor and second father, as he styled him. The Hebrew was informed of every thing that took place in Obrazétz's house, as well in the boyárin's as in the heretic's quarter. How he gained this information, Kourítzin himself did not know, and attributed this omniscience to the secrets of magic. In the meanwhile Skharía was acquainted also with Antony's love for the boyárin's daughter, and was alarmed at this passion, which might ruin the young foreigner; and, therefore, he began unceasingly to watch him and all that surrounded him. But in the course of these researches he had become more favourably disposed to the family of Obrazétz, which previously he had not liked, from not having been able to shake its religious convictions. In the struggle between the two parties, he was on that side to which Antony was attracted by the feelings of his heart.

The arrival of Skharía in Moscow was, for his partisans and disciples, a veritable triumph. It was said that he had obtained possession of a book, which Adam had received from God himself, and also the head of our primogenitor; that he had brought with him divers new secrets, which would astonish the human race. These reports reached even Mamón. His attempts to obtain magical assistance from Antony had not succeeded; and, therefore, he had decided on having recourse to the necromancy of the all-powerful Jew enchanter. The absence of Iván Vassilievitch left him free to fulfil this intention. True, it was difficult to obtain access to the great magician, whose place of abode was unknown to all except those most closely connected with him. He was every where, they said, and no where. Still more difficult would it be to obtain access for those who, without having devoted themselves to his instructions, merely sought magic assistance; and Mamón was, of course, to be counted among the latter number. With the aid, however, of large sums of money, and the

eager zeal of friends, he succeeded in having a day appointed for his reception.

He was conducted at night, with bandaged eyes, through various streets, and after many complicated turns admitted into a house. With difficulty he crawled up a staircase, winding in a spiral. On arriving at a particular spot, he was exhorted to bend down his head as low as possible; but much as he forced himself to stoop, he received so vigorous a blow, that sparks flashed before his eyes. Here they stopped him, and warned him not to stir from the spot under penalty of being crushed to atoms. Then he was struck by certain sweet superhuman sounds, now swelling, now sinking, and at last dying away, and producing an irresistible sleep. Hardly had he begun to yield to the unwilling drowsiness, when thunder roared, and a sulphurous smell was perceived. The floor tottered beneath him, and he felt as if he were sinking through the earth. A tremor seized him. He was about to cross himself, but refrained, remembering that the slightest mark of the cross would destroy him. Suddenly the bandage fell from his eyes, and he found himself surrounded by moving clouds of blue mist or smoke, in which, as it appeared to him, he was borne along. Little by little, the clouds grew thin, fiery specks began to gleam, and he was gradually free'd from his mysterious pall. Mamón found himself in a gigantic chamber; before him stood a table of enormous size, covered with brocade, in which gold was so thickly interwoven in innumerable particles, that it pained the eyes to look on it. On the table stood seven candles of pure wax, of a virgin whiteness, in golden candlesticks; and there lay on it, beside, an enormous open book, so ancient that it looked as though the first touch would reduce it to dust, and a human skull. Mamón observed the head of a serpent peering out from its eye-sockets. Behind the table, on a kind of elevation, sat an old man. His stern glance from under bushy white eyebrows, his tawny face, the white beard reaching to his knees, the black, ample mantle, inscribed with cabalistic characters of a bloody colour: all this must have awe-struck him who came to consult the oracle.

"The reason why thou comest is known to us," said the mysterious old man, in a voice that seemed to issue from the grave: "thou art to fight in the list with thy sworn foe, Khabár-Sinskoi, and thou asketh us for victory over him. Is it not so?"

Mamón replied, that the mysterious personage, whom he knew not how to name, had read his thoughts, and fell upon his face at some distance from the terrible being.

"Thy faith is strong in our power," continued the mysterious old man. "Even now, as thou appearedst before us, the book of our father Adam opened of itself, and showed how to save thee from the steel. Listen! The spirits of the night have brought into the world the wonder-working man-drake. Its power destroyeth the strongest iron; its touch alone against a sword breaketh it in pieces. It is hidden from the eye of man in the depth of unapproachable forests; it is incessantly guarded by two serpents, who keep watch over it in turns, day and night. The eagle, the king of birds, hath alone

the gift and strength to take it from their guard. Command thy servants to find in the surrounding woods an eagle's nest with nestlings. Now is just the time when they are fledged. Prepare a net woven of wires, of the thickness of a sword-blade, order the servants to watch till the male and female eagle fly away for prey for their young. If the hen remain, let them frighten her away. Then must the net be fixed over the nest in such-wise, that it will be impossible for the old birds to pass through to their young ones, or give them food. These humble preparatory duties thy servants can perform; thus it is spoken in the book of Adam. Between evening and dawn the eagle will find the mandrake, he will with it break in pieces the net, and hide the mandrake in the nest for another similar occasion. Now beginneth thy turn. Dost thou feel in thyself enough strength and valour to fight, without human aid, alone with the two eagles—namely, by the nest where thou must thyself find and take the mandrake? Remember, when thou performest this achievement, no human soul but thyself must be nearer than a hundred fathoms, nor must see thee take the wonder-working mandrake. Thou mayest fight with whatever weapons thou thinkest good, but without a breast-plate. Look whether the achievement be not above thy strength."

"I am ready even for a flock of eagles, if only I may obtain victory over my hated foe," answered Mamón.

The mysterious servant of the invisible spirits assured him of undoubted victory if he only could obtain the mandrake; and gave him instructions how to attach it to the point of his sword, by means of a substance which was not metal, but resembled iron in colour.

"Now," said he, "begone and perform all that I have told thee, without departing one hair's-breadth from our words, and with faith in our might, which we have received from the father of the human race."

In obedience to instructions previously given him, Mamón placed on the table a handful of silver, and again fell on the earth. Then again began to rise the columns of smoke, growing denser and denser, and at length shrouding all objects. Then vanished the mysterious old man, and the book of Adam; there only glimmered and flashed up and down seven fiery specks, and the skull gnashed its yellow teeth. Mamón's head began to turn, and he fell down insensible. When he came to himself, he was on the bank of the Yaúza, where his slaves awaited his return with his horse.

On the next day the thirst for vengeance early roused Mamón. His first thought, his first action, was to dispatch fowlers and falconers in every direction through the surrounding forests. A rich reward was promised to the man who should find an eagle's nest with eaglets. A week did not pass away before one of the people he had sent brought him the wished-for tidings. About twenty versts from the city, towards the north, in the depth of the forest, by the information of the neighbouring peasants, a nest had been discovered with two young eagles, just beginning to be fledged.—"And we had an opportunity to get a glance at the old one," said the happy fowler: "such a bird I never saw in my life. When he soars, he observeth the sun with his wings."

The promised reward, increased too by a present, was paid. Now was the time to make the iron net, and fix it over the nest. People were sent to execute this; their head was pledged for the performance of the order.

In the mean time the boyarin, sleeping and awake, was in imagination fighting with the eagle. He calculated all possible attacks on the part of the king of the birds, he studied all modes of defence against him, all means of destroying him. Mamón even fought with bears: the shaggy quadruped was more than a match for any bird, though a royal one; yet many a bruin fell before his powerful and dexterous arm. He anticipated a triumph both over the eagle and over Khabar: his breast swelled at the result of his successful experiment, his heart bounded. After dispatching the fowlers, he set off himself with a number of falconers, in order to be nearer to the place of action. The forest in which the nest had been found stood not far from the left bank of the river Moskva. On this bank a rich tent was pitched for the boyarin. The fowlers posted themselves around it. Another person, more tranquil in soul, would have been enraptured with the picturesque panorama which surrounded the boyarin. How many objects were there for a good and loving heart, not yet chased from the paradise of pure thoughts and enjoyments! The river sportively spread its silver sheet, and imaged a multitude of various capes, reaches, and creeks: the creative pencil of the Almighty Artist had scattered, here green silken lawns, there mirror-like lakes, gazing lovingly up at their heaven; there groups or shadowy clumps of trees, or a dark pine-forest, which crowned a height with its jagged wall, or timidly advanced from the sides of mountains, or poured its dark torrent down their slopes. Whoever knows the banks of Arkhangelsk and Ilinsk, will confess with me that there was ample food for admiration. It was exactly in this spot that the boyarin fixed his halting-place. But his soul flew far away to another spoil; and, like a hungry carrion-crow, could not rest until it had drank blood. Had he possessed the power, he would have invited all the birds of prey from the surrounding forest to his feast of blood, where he would have offered them, as the best regale, the carcass of his foe.

In the midst of these dark thoughts Mamón heard the fatal announcement—"ready." Agitated, all trembling, he demanded from his emissaries a repetition of their report. Though engaged in sacrilege, he signed the cross, that emblem of peace and purity of soul; the blasphemers dared to pray to the Almighty for success in his enterprise. He questioned the people in detail, how, and what they had done; how they had executed his command. He listened greedily to the relation of the fowlers; and, when their tale was done, he still desired to hear it all again; and again he forced them to repeat it.

When Mamón's attendants were informed that he was going alone against the eagles, (not, however, knowing what was his object,) they all, casting themselves at his feet, began to implore him not to attempt so unequal a contest. It was for no love of him they did this—the boyarin was cruel even to them—no, but from

fear on their own account. He might have gone, and welcome, to certain death, so long as they would not have to answer for it. Would their story be believed, that he had forbidden them to follow him when going to such evident danger? The prayers of his attendants were in vain; the boyarin determined on the conflict.

On the morrow, at daybreak, he was to be at the place of action.

He did all he could to close his eyes, but could not. At midnight he fell into a doze, but frightful visions pursued him even in sleep. Now a crow pecked him on the bosom, and, tearing forth his heart, croaked and chuckled over it. Then a long string of spirits, all pale-white and transparent, skim around him, flit over him, seize him, so that his life seems torn away, and whirl him through the cold, clammy mist of their substance. At another time he is imprisoned in a human skeleton, as in a cage, with the agony of gazing through the bony grating upon the world, free, sporting, rejoicing—he struggles to burst out, and his head is fixed between the dry ribs. Then again a cold, slimy snake curled up upon him as he slept, and lay in a wreath upon his bosom, it does not remain on his breast, it descends, and then again it crawls upon his bosom, it fixes its head to his open mouth, and Mamón sucks, sucks it in with a slow and long-drawn gurgle. And every time at these horrible visions Mamón was awakened. His heart died within him, his hair bristled up. Oh, that he could but hear the herald-crow of the cock! He awakes his people, and, not trusting his own eyes, demands whether the dawn was breaking. "The morning is yet not come," they said; and he lay down, and again began to doze. Then appeared before him his mother in an iron cage, enveloped in flames; through the dreadful tongues of fire she put forth a yellow withered face, shook the half-burned tatters of her arm, and said—"Go not!" He again awoke. Some one was standing over him—"Robbers!" he shouted in a dreadful voice.

"It is I, boyarin," said the fowler; "I have come to say the breeze hath got up from the east, the dawn is about to break."

And Mamón arose, and stood in deep thought awhile, like the traveller before the frail planks, which will either bear him safe across the abyss, or plunge him deep within it.

He walked forth out of the tent. The dawning was already matching shade after shade of her yellow and crimson draperies. The attendants were ready with all preparations for the chase. The saddled steeds neighed.

"A horse and hunting-tackle!" cried Mamón.

In an instant he was fully accoutred, bow, arrows, kisten, one knife, then another.

According to the directions of the magician, he put on no breast-plate. At the head of a numerous train he rode into the forest.

At first they proceed along paths but slightly beaten; then even these disappear in the thick moss, which had never borne the track of living being. Marks on the trees, made by the hunters whom the boyarin had sent, alone served to guide their course. The trees grew huger and thicker as they advance; proud and mighty, they shut out with their thick tops all the prospect which separated them from each other, and

seemed to forbid the growth in their society of saplings and brushwood—that mob which had dared to thrust itself among them. Their summits alone enjoyed the light ; below them all was gloom. It was only here and there that a sunbeam, stealthily gliding in between their boughs, encircled their boles with its umbered ribands, sprinkling the moss with golden dew, checkering the shrubs with its fitting network. Beneath this ray lay basking, now a lizard green as verdigris, now a snake warming his leopard-spotted back. All was still throughout the forest ; not one singing-bird was seen. Hardly did the vermin, hearing the approach of man, rustle and slink away ; or the trees, touched by the gentle wind, seem to communicate to each other some mysterious news. Here and there the horsemen were obliged to burst through the living barricade with the chest of their steeds. And now they have ridden about two versets.—“Are we near the place?” inquired Mamón.

“About two hundred fathoms,” replied one of the fowlers.

They continued to ride a little further, and Mamón orders them to halt. Receiving directions in which line to ride so as to find the fatal tree, and giving them orders to gallop instantly to his aid as soon as they heard his voice, and crossing himself, he departed alone to seize the *mandrake*.

The steed, feeling his loneliness, turned restive and began to rear ; over his coat passed changing shadows. But one movement, one accent of his powerful rider, and the steed, trembling, darted on.

Here at last was the longed-for tree. Steps had been cut in its stem. It was an elm, and had been growing for ages. The leafy head was in the full vigour of its strength, while on its stem the tooth of time had hollowed out a deep cavity, and the tough roots hardly rose from the earth. Scattered around, the heads and skeletons of animals showed that here was the haunt of birds of prey. On the summit of the tree was a shapeless heap of dry sticks—the eaglet’s cradle, the object of the boyárin’s journey. The king of birds screamed as he perceived his foe ; in the sounds of his own voice might be distinguished the humiliation and despair of the mighty. The air was filled with his complaints. Mamón dismounted from his horse, tied him to a tree at some distance, and approached the fatal elm. At the root lay fragments of iron. Whether the net had been badly forged by the hand of a person bribed by the cunning Skhária, whether the eagles had broken it, or the fowlers themselves, corrupted by the Jew’s silver, is a point of which the relater of our tale can give no account. He only knows that the traces of the broken net struck and encouraged the boyárin.

The eagle was perched upon a branch.

As he saw him, Mamón turned up his sleeve ; trembling with delight, he drew his bow—aimed—the string clanged, the arrow whistled . . . But the eye which feared not to gaze on the sun, anticipated the shaft : the eagle flew away, his broad wings rustled, and soon he vanished into the covert of the distant trees. The shaft burying itself deep into an enormous bough, fixed humming there, and the dry twigs flew around. The boyárin again began to await the return of

the eagle, but he came not ; the winged king himself was watching him. Impatience seized Mamón. Bow and quiver were thrown aside ; he begins to clamber up the tree, and the eagle again flies over him. Making a wide circle in the air, he perched upon his native elm, close to his offspring. His screaming was like the war-trumpet calling to the battle. Roused by his voice, the mother bird darted from the nest, where she was sitting ; she turns her head, and, seeing the enemy, she answers the male with a complaining scream. It seemed as if they were agreeing to defend their young, or die. Mamón is already advancing along the boughs ; suddenly around him there is a rustling roar, as of a hail-storm. The eagles whirl above him, furiously screeching, stretch their talons towards him, and so daringly approach him that they almost reach him with their beaks. He defends himself from the one, the other flies at him. Suddenly he strikes the male with his kisten—the weapon, glancing off the bird’s wing, breaks in two a thick branch, and, carried away by the force of the blow, falls to the earth. The frightened horse starts aside. The birds, as if discouraged by the blow, give themselves a moment of repose. Mamón profits by the interval, climbs higher on the branch ; another he reaches, a third, and now he is close to the nest. But the eagles do not leave their young ones without protection. They perch between the nest and the enemy. Their savage glance was fixed on Mamón, and terrified his soul. With their wings they cover him as with a tent. At the first movement of his knife the male flies to another branch, behind the foe. Mamón follows him with his eye, and, while he raises his foot a little higher on the branch, with one hand he grasps at the nest, with the other he endeavours to plunge the knife into the breast of the female ; she starts aside, under the cover of the branches, and is only slightly wounded. At her piteous cry the eaglets put their heads out of the nest ; the male flies at Mamón from behind, plunges his talons into him, and tears his back with his beak. Emboldened by the example of the male, the she eagle on her side throws herself on the enemy. The fight begins. The birds screech, buffet him with their wings, tear him with their beak as with a sickle, and mangle him with their talons. But Mamón defends himself with desperation, fighting and stabbing with his knife. Blood flows on both sides. The cries of their offspring inspire the winged combatants with new fury. The hunter has no longer the hope of escaping from their terrible talons : he gives the signal of despair, and the forest repeats it with a thousand echoes. The eagles envelop Mamón with their wings, entangle themselves with him, and all three, exhausted, streaming with blood, tumble from the tree in a disorderly mass : stopped by the branches, they swing a moment on them as in an airy cradle, and at last tumble with a crash to the ground. Terrified by the fall, the steed neighs, bursts the halter, and gallops off.

The attendants rush to the spot, stab the eagles with knives, batter them with kistens, and with difficulty save their master, half dead, from his horrid prison. The feet of the birds, though hacked off, yet cling to the foe, fastened deeply into him by the talons.

The nest is thrown down, the eaglets killed. They convey away the boyárin with caution, and carry him on a litter to a neighbouring village. Thanks to the wings of the birds, he had escaped a fatal fall. But on his body there was hardly a spot without a wound.

Thus finished Mamón's adventure in search of the *mandrake*. Reports were spread abroad that, in a combat with a bear, he had fallen under its paw; but that he had, nevertheless, come off victorious. For this exploit the boyárin received from brave men many any unmerited bow.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE CUNNING MEDIATRESS.

"Passion that in youth inspired her,
She had ne'er forgot in age,
Though this love was late, it fired her
To a fierce and sullen rage."

ROUSLAN and LIUDMILLA.

ANASTASIA, in bidding farewell to her brother, and following with her heart the beloved foreigner, remained in deep loneliness. Never yet had she so powerfully felt that loneliness; her breast was torn, her heart seemed crushed. She comprehended that she loved the heretic; but wherefore, how, and with what object she loved him, she could give no account to herself. The thought of being his wife, even if it ever entered her brain, alarmed her very self: a maiden, educated in the strictest orthodoxy, how could she ever unite her destiny in the house of God with an accursed German? Fresh reports, too, reached her—reports spread by Bartholomew, (that fireman's rattle, which excited a disturbance without itself knowing what it did,) and confirmed by the imperial ambassador—that Antony the leech was a Jew, a quacksalver, and God knows what beside. Her poor reason was still further armed against the inmate of her home by these rumours. But to tear him from her heart, to forget him, she could not—this was above the powers of Anastasia. Enchantment had overpowered her weak will. This thought grew day by day more strong within her.

Was it true that Antony had accepted her crucifix? . . . And had he worn it? Even if he had worn it, it was evident that it had caused him uneasiness. But, perhaps, he had accepted the cross in order to enchant it. From that moment her bosom seemed filled with seething pitch; when she looked at Antony, she could not remove her eyes from his form, she could not satisfy herself with gazing on him; she felt as if she could have plucked her soul from her bosom, and given it to him. If she could, she would have flown to him like a bird, and, forgetting maiden shame, father, brother, all—embraced him and died upon his breast. He was now afar, at Tver; yet she always saw him as though he was by her side, as if with his magic glance he implored her to admit him to her heart—she could not shut him out. Did she close her eyes? there, too, was the enchanter, sitting by her, and murmuring seductive, tender words, to which she could only find answer in Heaven. Did she open her eyes? before her stood the handsome foreigner, as in life. Nor cross nor sign would drive

away the phantom. Her maiden companions told her (surely they had heard it from their mothers,) that a girl might love a bridegroom, but only one whom she had seen several times; that she might love a husband when she had lived with him a year or two. But *he* had never been her betrothed; why, then, from the first moment she had ever seen him, had she yielded up all her soul, her every thought, to him? Even if he were to trample her under his foot, even then she could not leave him. Did she wander in the garden? bending down her head, she sought for some bright unearthly flower. Her little glancing feet were entangled in the silken grass; returning home, she murmured to herself—"All the flowers, the fair flowers, I have seen; but one flower I have not found, the fair scarlet flower of mine! Is it, then, withered by the hot sun? Or is it beaten down by the rushing rain? Or doth it not grow at all in the garden!" Neither sports, nor dance, nor songs, could distract her sorrow. In the midst of the choral dance she beheld the beloved stranger. Did one of her companions press her hand, she trembled; the song but lighted up the fire in her heart, and filled it with fresh sorrow. Without hope, without a sweet future, she only desired to liberate herself from her intolerable enchantment. But she dared not speak about her sorrows to any being on the earth. Having sinned only in love for the heretic, she often melted into tears in the midst of her devotions, beat her breast, and did penance for grievous sin of which she herself was guiltless.

The nurse had remarked that her foster-child was pining away with some secret sorrow, that her face grew paler. Her father, too, began to observe it. They sent to consult the old *wise women*; they told fortunes, they tried to discover Anastasia's cause of sorrow with water, with coals, with *Thursday salt*; they brought out the mysterious circles on the doors; they placed charms beneath the images in the Church of the Nine Martyrs. The fortune-tellers at last decided that she was pining for a future husband, whom some enemy had crossed. There was abundance of suitors; some seemed not much to the boyarin's taste—it is true she was his only daughter, alone to him, like the sun in heaven; others were deterred by marriage-brokers, previously bribed by Mamón. "Anastasia Vassilievna hath faults," they said; "she hath a birth-mark, here a freckle, there a scar; she is frequently attacked by blindness; she groweth old; she cannot live long." It was impossible to bring these allegations to ocular proof; the suitors believed the words of the marriage-broker, and held their peace. The father and the nurse had recourse to pilgrimages; they set up tapers before the altars, lighted an ever-burning lamp, gave abundant alms to the poor, and all with the single hope of relieving their darling Nastia, the light of their eyes, from the influence of the wicked man who had crossed her happy marriage.

The widow Selnova had been informed by the fortune-tellers with whom she was acquainted, and by the companions of Anastasia, of her illness. Having reviewed in her crafty mind the feelings of the heart, and the results of experience, she began to guess that there was in all this an undivulged secret. To discover this,

and to obtain Anastasia's confidence—this was what she determined on doing, cost what it might. By marriage she was a distant relation of Obrazétz's. When she became a widow, she rarely visited the voevóda's house, as if to guard against the dangerous assiduities of Khabar: she was so young—she might yet look forward to a second marriage, and her good name was so precious! . . . In society she was a model of reserve, never let drop an indiscreet word; never raised her eyes before a man; blushed deeply at the sound of an incautious word. Mothers often set her as an example before their daughters. But this exterior reserve was changed into passionate devotion, when in private with her chosen lover. All was for him the voluptuous joys of the night and by day the sweet remembrance of them; the hope of future pleasures, and every kind of sacrifice that could be exacted from her by a fiery youth who was a tyrant in love, or could be imagined for his gratification. In such cases love is a wondrous creator. Compared with love what is Byron, Mitzkévitsh, or Póushkin? All gifts were laid down by the worshipper at the foot of the idol—gold, peace of mind, beauty. But the careless and dissipated Khabar, could he confine his victory to one object? Such a victory would have been for him nothing but a slavery! "Free arm, free will, and free heart," was his motto. Away with every obstacle from his path!—nay, he would have overthrown whomsoever had placed one in it; try but to cast a chain over him, he would dash it off with a giant's force. He saw danger in his amour with Haidée, and pursued that amour despite the watchfulness of the despot of the Morea, perhaps at the dagger's point—a dagger sharpened by the power of gold. To-morrow he might lose his head, but to-day he would enjoy his will. When Selínova learned that she had a rival in his heart, that the sacrifices of another were more welcome, jealousy inflamed her. At first she tried to recall his love by new caresses, new sacrifices. Like an abject slave, she bore cruel usage—even blows—from him. To whom would she not have had recourse in order to recall her faithless lover?—to the witches, to the Jew who possessed the book of Adam, and to the leech Antony! She had even sunk so far as to entreat the aid of the interpreter Bartholomew. Like a simple child she was ready to confide even in those whom she knew to be mocking her, and to do as they counselled her. But when all these means failed, she determined, whatever it might cost, to destroy her rival. We have seen that this attempt did not succeed. She now determined on revenging herself on Khabar with any weapons which she could find; and for this, taking advantage of his absence, she crept like a snake into Obrazétz's house. Her dwelling was close to that of Anastasia's father, and her visits became frequent.

The boyarin knew, and desired to know nothing of his son's connexions. He was grieved by his dissipated conduct, and sometimes reproached him, in the hope, as we have said in a former chapter, that the young steed would gradually lose the vice of his blood. But the single exhortation which he had addressed to him at parting, had, in reality, produced a great-

er effect than any number of angry remonstrances. When he saw the widow Selínova in his house, he led her, with simple greetings, to his daughter, as a sensible and discreet companion. At each fresh visit, she insinuated herself further into Anastasia's confidence. Now she would invent some new sport in the gardens, then she would teach her songs, the feeling of which harmonized with the temper of Anastasia's soul, or show her ingenious patterns for her lace-work, or spread for her the flying carpet of the fairy tale. And, in spite of yourself, you would listen to Selínova; her simple conversation was always made up of fragments of song; how could you but listen, when she spoke only to please? In the mean time the widow tried cautiously, artfully, to discover whether the maiden's heart beat for any of the young neighbours whom she might have seen through the garden fence; but she ascertained that none of the young dandies of that day, with their hair cut round, had fascinated Obrazétz's daughter. Next, she turned the conversation on Ivan the young. It was notorious that Anastasia had inspired the prince, the heir to the throne of Muscovy, with a passion which had been destroyed by the Great Prince's projects; he never seeking in the marriages of his children a union of the heart, but a political advantage. "Did she not regret such a handsome, noble young bridegroom; was she not pining for a palace and the glitter of a crown?" thought Selínova. And after making a trial in this direction, she remained uncertain, like the hero of our fairy tales at the crossing of several roads, not knowing which to take in order to arrive at the object of his journey. Anastasia had altogether forgotten the prince. His passion had always been considered by her as a pleasantry; and even now she received the mention of him as little else than a jest. It was, nevertheless, impossible to doubt that it was the heart and not the bodily health of Obrazétz's daughter, that was affected. Selínova's experienced eye soon distinguished this. Who could be the object of her love? The wily widow was tormented with the desire of finding out this.

One day, they were sitting alone together, making lace. A kind of mischievous spirit whispered her to speak of the heretic. Imagine yourself thrown by destiny on a foreign land. All around you are speaking in an unknown tongue; their language appears to you a chaos of wild, strange sounds. Suddenly, amid the crowd drops a word in your native language. Does not then a thrill run over your whole being? does not your heart leap within you? Or place a Russian peasant at a concert where is displayed all the creative luxury and all the brilliant difficulties of foreign music. The child of nature listens with indifference to the incomprehensible sounds; but suddenly Voróbieva with her nightingale voice trills out.—*The cuckoo from out the firs so dank hath not cuckooed.* Look what a change comes over the half-asleep listener. Thus it was with Anastasia! Till this moment Selínova had spoken to her in a strange language, had only uttered sounds unintelligible to her; but the instant that she spoke the native word, it touched the heart-string, and all the chords of her being thrilled as if they

were about to burst. Anastasia trembled, her hands wandered vaguely over her lace cushion, her face turned deadly pale. She dared not raise her eyes, and replied at random, absently.

"Ah!" thought Selinova, "that is the right key: that is the point whence cometh the storm!"

Both remained silent. At length Anastasia ventured to glance at her visitor, in order to see by the expression of her face, whether she had remarked her confusion. Selinova's eyes were fixed upon her work, on her face there was not even a shade of suspicion. The crafty widow intended little by little, imperceptibly, to win the confidence of the inexperienced girl.

"And where then is *he* gone?" she asked after a short pause, without naming the person about whom she was enquiring.

"He is gone with the Great Prince on the campaign," answered Anastasia blushing; then, after a moment's thought, she added—"I suppose thou askedst me about my brother?"

"No, my dear, our conversation was about Antony the leech. What a pity he is a heretic! You will not easily find such another gallant among our Muscovites. He hath all, both both height and beauty: when he looketh, 'tis as though he gave you large pearls; his locks lie on his shoulders like the light of dawn; he is as white and rosy as a young maiden. I wonder whence he had such beauty—whether by the permission of God, or, not naturally, by the influence of the Evil One. I could have looked at him—may it not be a sin to say, I could have gazed at him for ever without being weary!"

At these praises Anastasia's pale countenance blushed like the dawning that heralds the tempest. "Thou hast then seen him?" asked the enamoured maiden, in a trembling, dying voice, and breaking off her work.

"I have seen him more than once. On the steed doth he ride? 'Neath him frets the steed with pride. Doth he gallop? What is the whirlwind in the desert plain! He seemeth to snort fire—that steed; and devour the earth with speed. Doth he ride along the mead? 'Neath his tread new verdure gleameth; o'er the stream to his embrace, to rush it seemeth. I have not only seen him, but wonder now, my dear—I have visited him in his dwelling!"

The maiden shook her head; her eyes were dimmed with the shade of pensiveness; a thrill of jealousy, in spite of herself, darted to her heart. "What? and didst thou not fear to go to him?" she said—"Is he not a heretic?"

"If thou knewest it, Nastenka, what wouldst thou not do for love?"

"Love?" . . . exclaimed Anastasia, and her heart bounded violently in her breast.

"Ah! if I were not afraid, I would disclose to thee the secret of my soul."

"Speak, I pray thee speak! Fear not; see! I call the Mother of God to witness, thy words shall die with me."

And the maiden with a quivering hand, signed a large cross.

"If so, I will confide to thee what I have never disclosed to God. It is not over one blue sea alone that the mist lieth, and the darksome cloud; it is not over one fair land descendeth the gloomy autumn night; there was

a time when my bosom was loaded with a heavy sorrow, my rebellious heart lay drowned in woe and care: I loved thy brother, Ivan Vassilievitch. (The maiden's heart was relieved, she breathed more freely.) Thou knowest not, my life, my child, what kind of feeling is that of love, and God grant that thou mayest never know! The dark night cometh, thou canst not close thine eyes; the bright dawn breaketh, thou meetest it with tears; and the day is all weary—O, so weary! There are many men in the fair world, but thou see'st only one, in thy bower, in the street, in the house of God. A stone lieth ever on thy breast, and thou canst not shake it off."

Then Selinova wept sincere tears. Her companion listened to her with eager sympathy; the feelings just depicted were her own.

"Now," continued the young widow, addressing herself to her object, "I was told by good people—'Antony the leech,' they said, 'is come from Almayne; he cureth, they say, all manner of diseases, of the Evil Eye, and of the wind, and of our own folly.' I listened to these good friends, and went to the leech with the interpreter Bartholomew."

"And what help did our Antony give thee?"

"He gave me an herb, muttered something over it, and ordered me to throw it over my head. Wilt thou believe me, my dear, it relieved me like a charm? my breast felt light, my heart gay. Then the heretic fixed his eyes upon me, and I felt his gaze drawing me towards him. But I implored him to let my soul go free, and he took pity on me, and let me go. From that instant I began again to know what was night, what day; my vision left me. I flew away like a liberated bird; I sing from morn till night, and laugh at my past sorrow."

This insidious tale began to act with a wondrous influence on the listener. Anastasia fell into a profound reverie, began to entangle her bobbins and to make strange patterns; just such as her favourite cat would have executed if she had been set to work lace. How could she escape the dreadful weight of anguish which was devouring her, thought she; and she had determined on consulting with Selinova, when suddenly her friend had seemed to guess her very cause of sorrow. There was a deep silence. It was broken by the young widow.

"Nastenka, my life!" she began in a tone of such touching, such lively interest, as called for her reluctant confidence.

The daughter of Obrazetz glanced at her with eyes full of tears, and shook her head.

"Confide in me, as I have confided in thee," continued Selinova, taking her hand and pressing it to her bosom. I have lived longer in the world than thou . . . believe me, 'twill give thee ease . . . 'tis clear from every symptom, my love, what thou ailest."

And Anastasia, sobbing, exclaimed at last—"O, my love, my dearest friend, Praskovia Valdimirovna, take a sharp knife, open my white breast, look what is the matter there!"

"And wherefore need we take the sharp knife, and wherefore need we open the white breast, or look upon the rebellious heart! Surely, by thy fair face all can tell, my child, how that fair face hath been darkened, how the fresh bloom hath faded, and bright eyes grown

dull. After all, 'tis clear thou lovest some wandering falcon, some stranger youth."

Anastasia answered not a word; she could not speak for tears, and hid her face in her hands. At last, softened by Selinova's friendly sympathy, and her assurances that she would be easier if she would confide her secret to such a faithful friend, she related her love for the heretic. The episode of the crucifix was omitted in this tale, which finished, of course, with assurances that she was enchanted, bewitched.

Poor Anastasia!

Snowdrop! beautiful flower, thou springest up alone in the bosom of thy native valley! And the bright sun arises every day to glass himself in thy morning mirror; and the beaming moon, after a sultry day, hastens to fan thee with her breezy wing; and the angels of God, lulling thee by night, spread over thee a starry canopy, such as king never possessed. Who can tell from what quarter the tempest may bring from afar, from other lands, the seeds of the ivy, and scatter them by thy side; and the ivy arises and twines lovingly around thee, and chokes thee, lovely flower! This is not all: the worm has crawled to thy root, hath fixed its fang therein, and kills ye both, if some kind hand save ye not.

The crafty friend had triumphed; the great, the precious secret was hers. With this talisman the enchantress might perform wondrous things. She had but to wave it, and the secret thought would swell above the brink. The first idea that arose was that of persuading Anastasia that she really was enchanted. How was she to be set free from that enchantment, to whom was she to have recourse, if not to the author of it? He would perhaps take pity on the unhappy maiden, and save her from intolerable sorrow, as he had delivered Selinova. Anastasia herself had more than once thought of this. Upon this they agreed as well as possible. But how was the daughter of Obrazéts to visit the leech? How was she to manage so as to escape the notice of the domestics and neighbours? She would die at the very thought of their knowing of her proceeding. The zealous mediatress would arrange all this. From Anastasia's chamber a staircase led to the iron door which divided the heretic's from the boyarin's quarter: this door was fastened with a single iron bolt. A favourable moment would arrive—father, brother, would be from home; Selinova would stand on guard, and all would go well. Anastasia would present herself before Antony the leech, would fall at his feet, bedew them with her tears. . . . The enchantment would be removed—and the beautiful maiden would dart from his chamber to her bower, as the bird which a greedy raven was about to clutch, and to which new wings had suddenly been given, speeds lightly and gaily away, and pours forth her soul in songs of virgin happiness. The very reflection upon these projects was a great relief to the mind of Anastasia.

THE ENCHANTMENT LOOSED.

"This dark woe of mine hath no wings to fly,
This poor soul of mine hath no voice to cry,
This torn love of mine hath no will to die."

MERZLIAKÓFF.

ANASTASIA was for a while consoled by the thought that the enchantment would be removed. Then the fair image of the foreigner began again to force its way into her bosom, and her hope began to yield to her former sorrow. It seemed as if there was traced around her a magic circle, out of which she could not pass. She was, she thought, imprisoned in it till the grave. Now, all her thoughts were on the dear heretic; all her employment was to await his return. She had grown accustomed to his name, she no longer dreaded it; it had become as sweet to her as the name of father or brother, nay, perhaps yet dearer still. She sat cowering at the window of her chamber, and gazed afar, to see whether the Great Prince's attendants were galloping from Tver. With a trembling of the heart she listened to conversation: did not some one speak of the heretic? She even listened to the voice of the breeze: did not the midnight breeze bring some news of him? He, the sovereign of her heart, was unceasingly in her thoughts; of him she held in secret long dialogues with herself, and longed for father, domestics, the people, all the universe, to talk also of Antony. And yet she heard nothing of him from any one. Did a horseman gallop by, or knock at the gate, she trembled like an autumnal leaf upon the bough. She rose to meet the day; she passed it in waiting for the stranger. Untaught by reason to govern her feelings, she gave herself up entirely to the will of passion. With tears, in reverie, she besought the dear Antony to return, soon, soon, and save her from destruction; she feared not the sin of imploring the heavenly powers for him, she blushed not to express her agonizing impatience to her crafty friend.

Tver was not yet completely taken, ere in Moscow men were talking of its submission. Who had brought the tidings, nobody could tell; so frequently has a nation a sort of miraculous presentiment of great events. Within four-and-twenty hours, a écurier had galloped from the Lord of All Russia to Sophia Phomfínishna and the primate with the confirmation of the tidings. Moscow burst into triumphal rejoicings. The elder sister had come with an humble head to join the once scattered family, and to double its union and its strength. According to the pious custom of the Russians, tribute was first rendered to God—a thanksgiving service was performed; then to the Tsar. When Sophia Phomfínishna came forth from the Church of the Annunciation, the populace hailed her with joyful acclamations. In the streets they embraced; they congratulated each other; they besieged the courier, and would not let him pass, demanding the details of the great event—when, how, Tver was taken, who had laid down their lives for mother Moscow, who had distinguished themselves by valour. We may guess, that in the fulness of their joy—and this was also a Russian custom—in all parts of the city there were many who celebrated the victory in a state of insensibility; that is, by drain-

ing cup and flagon till they could no longer remember anything. The courier was invited to a multitude of houses, was feasted and honoured as if it was he who had gained the victory.

In his tales the name of Khabar was repeated more frequently than that of all the rest, and repeated as the name of an illustrious hero. The *volunteers* came next, in the most honourable line of the oral bulletin. "We, too, are something!" said the cloth-workers and silk-merchants in their shops and warehouses, drawing themselves up, and stroking their beards with vanity—"We are not trampled in the dirt: we have taken Tver." Some heartily congratulated them as the real victors, bowing to the ground; others thought proper to contest their triumph, and engaged with them in brawls of their fashion, which went so far as the spilling of blood, and even killing. The name of Andréi Aristotle, to the astonishment of all, flew also, with honour, from mouth to mouth. "What a brave boy!" cried the old men when they heard of his exploits: "bold, though not old, he will not wait for years to be a leader of the spears."—"No wonder for his bravery," added others; "his father hath plucked some apples for him in the devil's garden: throw but one among a troop, and straightway the troop hath vanished. They say, besides, 'that Antony the leech made a circle round him, and he can have no hurt either from fire or the enemy's arrows.'" More than all the rest did this news delight the heart of the old voevóda, Obrazétz. The courier, immediately after leaving the palace of the primate, presented himself before him with the *gracious word* from the Lord of All Russia, and his best thanks to the father for the son. This time nature conquered firmness, and the old man's face was bedewed with tears. Never had his own glory flattered him so much, as the renown his son had gained. First in his own oratory, and then in the house of God, he laid the trophies of his son before the cross of Him by whom death itself was vanquished, and under whose protection had been obtained those triumphs by a warrior so dear to his heart.

Then the messengers of the Great Prince began incessantly to enter Moscow; the dust did not rest a moment in the streets of the city. The dvorétzkoï also arrived with his train. As soon as he had finished his duties at the Great Prince's palace, he paid a visit to his sick friend, whom he found almost on his death-bed, dreadfully disfigured, but still entertaining hopes of recovery. Disease and disappointment at having failed to obtain the mandrake, which had been just within his reach, had added new ferocity even to the savage soul of Mamón. Never had the fever of revenge so fiercely burned in his heart. When he heard of Khabar's successes, his face was horribly convulsed. When, too, the dvorétzkoï told him the news, that the Great Prince intended to give Obrazétz's daughter to the Tsarévitch Karakatcha, he started up for the first time from his sick bed and yelled out—"As God see'th, while I live that shall never be! They would not give her to my son, and she shall remain a maid for ever. She may take the vows; she may bury herself alive in the earth. What care I!—she shall never wed! Look, my friend, on me, on my son;

this is all *their* doing." The son of Mamón, who was standing by the bedside, was as pale as death; from his quivering chest there sounded ever and anon the hollow cough which is the presage of death—the echo from a tomb.

In obedience to the boyarin's orders, his servants brought him his richest cups and flagons. Without speaking a single word, he placed them in the dvorétzkoï's bosom, in his pockets—wherever he could. The latter would not take them, refused to accept them, thanked him; again refused, and accepted them nevertheless. He comprehended his friend, and left him, bearing off a speechless but eloquent pledge of vengeance.

A new visitor brought comfort to the agitated soul of Mamón. This was Selinova. She had beaten a pathway in her dark intercourse between the two enemies' houses. Long had she hesitated whether to relate the story of Anastasia's enchantment: but the thought of Khabar's insults and infidelity, the thought that he would soon return and be by Haidée's side—by *her* side, joyous, triumphant over all—this thought had vanquished the feelings of compassion, excited in her mind by her conscience and the affection of the enamoured girl. She related to Mamón all that she had learned respecting the maiden's inclination for the heretic. Wickedness has its moments of delight. Mamón laughed a bitter laugh when he received the astounding information which had fallen upon him so unexpectedly.

"Our Lord the Great Prince is come!" resounded through the city, and in every quarter of the town arose a murmur as in the beehive when the queen returns, having flown away to wander free, far from her watchful guard. "The Lord Great Prince is come!" was repeated in the palace of Obrazétz, and Anastasia's heart beat with expectation. It was not her brother whom she was awaiting: with respect to Khabar, a message had been sent to her father that, at the command of Ivan Vassilievitch, he would remain for a time at Tver, in attendance upon Ivan the Young. All trembling, she sat at the window of her chamber. And see! at last a horseman gallops up to the palace; he halts at the heretic's quarter. At his knock upon the gate, Antony's attendant opens it, stops, and gazes for some time at the stranger, and then eagerly hastens to make his obeisance to him.

That is not Antony. He was in the German mantle, his bright locks falling in curls upon his shoulders; but this was a young man with his hair cut round, in the Russian dress, in helmet and cuirass. His cheeks seem to glow; he is covered with dust from head to foot. In the mean time the attendant takes his horse, waits upon him as upon his master, and makes a sign that he can enter his dwelling. Through the aperture of the hardly opened window Anastasia follows the unknown with her eyes. She knows not what to think of his appearance in place of Antony the leech. But see! he stops on the steps, doffs his casque, decorated with a green branch and with a parrot's plume, wipes his face with a handkerchief, and lingers on the staircase, gazing mournfully at the window of the chamber. "Heavens! 'tis he!" cries Anastasia, blushing and turning pale. Yes, the stranger was Antony Ehrenstein! Love had

been too strong for his vow: he could not perform it, he had been again drawn back to that enchanted house, to which was linked his heart—his whole being.

"Who is that, my child?" asked the nurse, entering, and surprising her foster-child in her incautious exclamation.

"'Tis he . . . nurse . . . Look, if my brother be not come!" . . . replied the terrified girl, rushing from the window. She knew not what she was saying; the thought, that by her exclamation she might have awakened suspicion in the nurse's imagination, was the principal cause of her confusion.

"There is a young man standing on the heretic's staircase," said the nurse, shaking her head; "but it is not thy brother. See! he hath gone into Antony the leech's quarter."

Antony, on seeing the nurse's withered countenance instead of Anastasia's, hastened to enter his own dwelling.

Then began a lecture addressed to the poor girl, showing how dangerous it was to look into a strange court-yard, how easily the Evil Eye might take her, and, above all, the eye of a heretic necromancer: all this enforced by various popular texts, and confirmed by proofs and examples. It was a real torment! Anastasia, as it was, was on the rack; now her very soul was being lacerated. "I thought it was my brother," she said a dozen times in excuse, entreating forgiveness with tears. But seeing that nothing could restrain the tremendous torrent, which threatened to drown her, she vowed, in a tone of despair, that she would lay violent hands on herself if the nurse did not leave off tormenting her, and promise never to betray this circumstance to her father. These threats acted like a bucket of cold water on a madman, who is whirling his head around, or is about to dash it against a wall: the nurse held her tongue, and promised with an oath not to speak on the subject to the boyarin. Nevertheless, on the first occasion of Anastasia's going down stairs to her father, the fatal window was firmly, solidly nailed up. In this manner her chamber was rendered worse than a prison to her; they had taken away her last consolation—her last joy. From this time she could not bear her nurse, and drove her away from her whenever she appeared. What had become of her poor heart and reason? Severe measures to quell her feelings had only strengthened her love; and she fancied that, from the moment of Antony's arrival, the enchantment had acquired a greater, more irresistible power. Her torment was insupportable; she was on the point of losing her reason, or, in reality, of laying hands on herself, as she had threatened her nurse. Selinova, in her visits, but heaped combustibles beneath the pile, which was already inextinguishable, but cherished the unhappy maiden's thought that she was enchanted. Nothing remained but to cut this knot, which Fate had knitted in her destiny.

In this agony of mind she passed a week. Anastasia decided on the grievous but inevitable effort. She only awaited an opportunity of making it. This opportunity arrived. Her brother was not yet returned from Tver, her father had gone to feast with a friend on the occasion of some family festival, her nurse had been dis-

patched to make some purchases in the shops; the leech was at home—this fact was proved by the sounds floating from his chamber, the plaintive tones of his voice, and of the magic instrument with which, among other means, he had bewitched the daughter of Obrazetz. Her heart died away in her breast, so that she could hardly breathe. She had determined on going, and yet she feared to go. Bashfulness, terror, love under the disguise of indescribable sorrow, long struggled in her heart, and reduced her to a feverish condition. At last a kind of frenzy possessed her; she determined, and dispatched her tirewoman to beg Selinova to come to her. The widow knew why she was summoned, and hastened to make her appearance.

The waiting-women were dismissed to the garden, to walk or dance.

Anastasia offered her trembling hand to Selinova. They passed out of the chamber, and descended a dark staircase leading to the heretic's quarter. Many times did the daughter of Obrazetz entreat her companion to give her a moment to take breath; often did her foot slip on the stairs.

Before them stood the fatal door.

Anastasia stopped; she could hardly breathe. Through the chaos of her thoughts appeared one terrible idea. To whom was she going?—she, a maiden, the daughter of a boyarin! . . . To a man! to a foreigner! If her father—her brother were to see her! One glance from them would kill her on the spot. There was yet time to change her mind; she could yet return. She looked at her friend, as if to implore her aid. A ray of light through a chink of the iron door fell upon her face. Selinova remarked her indecision, and at the instant to hold the weak half-maddened girl on the fatal threshold; she drew back the iron bolt, the door opened . . . The crafty widow gave it a slight push forward, and Anastasia was in the heretic's quarter, in the same chamber with Antony the leech himself. . . . Selinova hurriedly and cautiously concealed herself behind the door, so that he could not see her.

Antony had laid his viol aside, and was sitting, resting his elbows on the table, in a profound reverie. A rustle behind the door caused him to start. He began to listen . . . The rustling behind the door increased. What could it mean? Was it an attack? Strange! by daylight! from the boyarin's quarter! . . . His arms hung on the wall, close to his hand; one step, and he could seize them. He had nothing to fear but force . . . But for what motive! Was it from hatred to a heretic! . . .

Hark! the bolt grates . . . the door creaks . . . opens . . . Heavens! Anastasia! . . . 'Tis herself! Antony uttered a cry of surprise, and clasped his hands. Thunderstruck at her appearance, he had not the power to stir from the spot.

Anastasia was at his feet, entreating him for something . . . At last he with difficulty distinguished the words—"Mercy! have pity upon me . . . loose me from the power of the Evil One . . . I cannot bear it more . . . it is heavy . . . it strangles me!" . . .

The young man raises her, takes her hand, presses it in his own, entreats her to explain herself, says that it is he who should rather be

at her feet; and at the same time, while awaiting her explanation, relates, in the most tender, the most burning expressions, his love, his torment, and his fears. Agitated, in tears, all glowing with blushes, she appears even more lovely than he had seen her before, from afar. No, never in his life, in Italy, in his native land, on the road to Moscow, had he ever met a woman who could bear even the remotest comparison with her. Nowhere but in the brain of an artist-poet could her ideal be realized. He knows not what he says or what he does: carried away by his feelings, he swears eternal love to her, and dares to imprint a kiss upon her hand.

And she . . . What had she come to tell him, what had she come to implore him? . . . Where was her determination, the object of all her struggles! His voice, his words and caresses, had thrown all into confusion. She forgot the past, she understood not the present; but that present was so sweet, it thrilled so deliciously through her blood, that she would not have exchanged it for all the past of her life. Her tongue essayed to give him the name of enemy of God, magician, enchanter; but refused to utter the sounds as though they were blasphemy. My life! my joy! she would have said; but she could not, though her heart in secret confirmed the name. Her hand was in his; she would have withdrawn it, but had not the power. At last she fell sobbing on his breast.

Antony clasped her in his embrace, seated her on a bench, and knelt before her. Understanding imperfectly what she meant by the words—"power of the Evil One," "magic," and joining these words with the reports which had been disseminated about him through Moscow, he swore by the Lord God, the Holy Virgin, and all the saints, that he was a Christian, that he accounted magic as a grievous and mortal sin, and had never thought of casting any glamour over her. As witnesses to his truth he pointed to the image, of Greek painting, which was placed in his chamber, crossed himself in the Russian manner, drew forth from his bosom and kissed a silver crucifix, which he had begged Khabar to give him,

"I love thee more than like itself," he said to her, "more than the mother who bore me. My only joy is to behold thee, but from far: I wither away like the leaf of autumn without thee. Light of my eyes, my life! I would not exchange one glance of thine for all the heaps of gold—for all the wealth of the Great Prince—for the honours of his boyarins—for all together. And thus it is I who am enchanted; it is I upon whom the glamour is cast. No, my dearest, my beloved, this is love and not enchantment. It is God who hath done this, and not the powers of evil. Demand of me what thou wilt, I will give thee my body piecemeal, my blood drop by drop; command, speak but the words, I will perform it. Am I hateful to thee? Order me to fly to some distant land—I will fly, and I will haste away there in mourning for thee; but I will perform thy bidding."

"No," said Anastasia with a sigh of love, "remain, but take our faith."

She, to save whose honour he would have

given up his life, had passed the threshold of a man's chamber; this alone had thrown a spot upon her virgin purity. Antony saw the abyss over which Fate had suspended an inexperienced maiden and himself; they had gone too far to turn back, and—he gave his promise to take the Russian faith. Her hand was to be the condition. To this there was no answer; but he read one in the beautiful eyes, shadowed by the veil of long black lashes, and the blush which flitted over her cheek. He encircled her waist with his arm, and pressed her to his heart. His kiss died upon her lips, the kiss of bridegroom to bride, the kiss that affiances them for life and death. Anastasia had not strength to resist.

The door creaked. Anastasia recollected herself, and tore herself from his embrace.

"Who is there?" he asked with terror.

"My friend . . . fear nothing" . . . replied Anastasia, rushing to the door.

Antony stood motionless, as though struck by the thunderbolt.

"A friend?—then there had been witnesses of their interview—then the honour of a maiden was pledged to a third person!" thought he, as he repeated the fatal vow in his mind.

The iron door groaned on its hinges, the bolt grated; and all that was inanimate returned to its place. But what a change had been experienced by the three beings who had performed the preceding scene! Yes, three; for even Selinova, who was capable of poisoning her lover, and then committing suicide for him, was capable also, in the moment of revenge, of any crime, and in the moment of generosity of the most extraordinary sacrifices, was so touched by the love of Antony and the daughter of Obrazetz, that she repented of her malicious proceedings and intentions towards them. She swore to Anastasia to be silent about their interview, and left her to the enjoyment of her happiness—that happiness which she knew by experience was so fugitive upon earth—and departed straight to Mamon. Here, with tears in her eyes, beating herself on the breast, she informed him, that all that she had said respecting Anastasia was an invention of her own, all calumny, a lie; that she was agonized, tortured by remorse, and ready to confirm all this by the most dreadful vow, even *under the bells*,* if he thought proper. Infuriated by this information, which ruined his best hopes, Mamon gnawed his fist, and very nearly kicked the young widow from his house.

And how was it with Anastasia? . . . Where had she been—what had she heard—what felt? On hand, lip, bosom, on her whole frame, glowed traces which she would carry with her even to the grave. How handsome, how kind he was! . . . No! he was not an accursed heretic, an enchanter; but her dear Antony, her beloved, her bridegroom, her priceless treasure! All that she had felt, Antony had felt too; as it had been with her, so had it been with Antony: this was not glamour—this they call love, Fool-

* A person charged with debt, &c., and unable to disprove by evidence his liability, had the privilege of clearing himself by proceeding, with a certain number of *compurgators* to a church, on which occasion the bells were rung, and there taking a solemn oath of his not being justly charged.—T. B. S.

ish girl! and she had not comprehended this before! It was all wrong that she had heard from her friends about love; it was evident they did not know what it was. He would adopt the Russian faith . . . he would demand her in marriage . . . her father would ask, "Dost thou love Antony?" "I love him as the light of God," she would say. No, she would never have the courage to say so to her father; he would understand it in her silence . . . What had he said to her—her beloved! Among all the tender words of father, brother, friends, she had never heard such words. Where could he have found them? They had made her soul so well, so joyful, that she could have hearkened for ever without being weary. Many of his words she had not understood; but it was clear they, too, were the same tender caresses that he had murmured to her in her dreams—to which she could nowhere find fit answer but in Paradise! And when he took her hand, she had not seen heaven's light, her eyes had grown dim. She felt as once when her nurse—for a jest—had intoxicated her with strong mead. 'Tis true, her eyes were dim, but her heart was so bright—brighter than she could tell. And when he kissed her lips . . . Heavens! she did not remember whether she was alive or whether she died at that moment!

Anastasia was all boiling with rapture—all full of life, like the festival goblet brimming to the foam-crown of its sparkling contents: like the rose bursting forth from its virgin bud beneath the burning glow of noon.

And how was it with Antony? . . . Was he not the child to whom chance had sent the precious toy which he has awaited with the pain and terror of impatience? No! he was young in years, but in soul he was a man, ready to keep his word in the struggle with all the powers of the earth, and all the inflictions of destiny. He would not retreat, though before him he beheld an abyss. He had given a promise; he would fulfill it; nought but death could prevent him. Already the struggle in his heart had ceased: there was one duty—a holy, an inevitable one. His determination was confirmed by the thought, that his mother, his instructor, had hinted, had indeed all but commanded him in each of their letters, to remain in Russia. His mother had herself promised, for some important but secret cause, to come over to him, if he could find an establishment there. Russia would become his second country; it was therefore indispensable that he should adopt the Russian faith. And what then? that faith was a Christian one, pure from the reproach of corruption and fanaticism, with which the Western church might be charged. Whole nations in the south of Europe were agitated by the ground-swell of religious opinion—Wicliffe, Huss, had thousands of followers; his native land had spilt, too, so much blood for these opinions! . . . It was true that, there, conviction was the moving power—and here, was there not interest, selfishness! No, here it was not alone selfishness, nor love. The salvation of a fellow-creature, a friend, a sister, a bride, from dishonour, from ruin, in this world and in the next, the salvation of a whole family from shame, of an aged father from an untimely death, and himself, perhaps, from the dreadful

sin of homicide—was not all this a lofty aim, and one well worthy of the sublimest sacrifices? Antony knew that by these sacrifices he would not destroy his soul; and even if it were needful that he should destroy his soul for Anastasia, for the preservation of her honour, which was placed in such frightful peril—he would not have hesitated. These are the reasonings with which the hero of our tale armed himself in order to quiet his conscience, which was somewhat disturbed. It is useless to conceal it—many of them were dictated by his heart, by passion rather than reason or strength of will. We do not wish to make him out better than he was.

The idea of obtaining the hand of the boyarin's daughter was by no means an unreasonable one. There was one condition—the change of religion. With the fulfilment of this condition, the foreigner would obtain access to the house of God: the head anointed with the holy oil, might stand beneath the marriage crown with a Russian maiden. How many examples were there, of newly-christened Tartars espousing the daughters of boyarins! The fathers thought to save a soul by such a marriage, which, according to their notions, redeemed an infidel from eternal fires. The Great Prince himself had approved of similar unions of Russians with foreigners, and had endowed the newly-married couples with estates. But of course it was not estates that attracted Antony: he would refuse them. Anastasia's hand was promised by the Great Prince to Karakatcha, Tsarévitch of Kassimóff, and the boyarin Obrázetz cherished a peculiar ill-will towards the inmate of his palace. . . . How prevent the dreadful union with the Tartar, and demolish the obstacles which separated him from Anastasia! To whom could he most readily and with the greatest hope of success have recourse, in order to attain both objects! . . . In the midst of such thoughts he was found by Andriousha.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE ARTIST'S FEVER-FIT.

"A lover, when he beholds the death of the woman he adores; a mother, parting for ever from her daughter; a father, deserted by ungrateful children; an exile, who cannot silence or disprove calumny: none of these unhappy beings can know suffering like that which is experienced by the artist who feels himself passing away, unappreciated, to eternity."—LAFONT.

"DEAR, ah, dear Antony! save my father," cried the son of Aristotle, rushing into the chamber.

"What is the matter?" inquired the leech, kissing the boy. "And thou thyself art all over blood."

"I hurt my temple a little . . . fell on the staircase . . . 'twill pass . . . But my father, my father! Ah, what will become of him! . . . It is now twenty-four hours since he has either eaten, or drank, or slept; he is delirious, complaining that they will not let him soar to heaven. . . . Just at daybreak he shut his eyes; I went up to him on tiptoe, I felt his head—his brow was burning, his lips parched, he breathed heavily . . . he opened his dim eyes, gazed without knowing what he saw, and talks incoherently with himself. Now he is sitting in the

square, on the bricks that they are preparing below the Church of Our Lady, waving his arm and beating his breast."

"Calm thyself. 'Tis nothing, my dear boy . . . Some artist's irritation. Let us go to him, and ask what is to be done."

They hurried out, and almost at full speed directed their path to the ruins of the Cathedral of the Annunciation.

They found the artist in the same attitude as when Andriousha had left him. His head was bare, his long hair streaming disorderly on the breeze; despair was imaged in his haggard eyes; a golden chain with a medal, the gift of the Great Prince, was turned round and hanging on his back. Amid the heaps of stone he looked a living ruin. At the approach of the physician, an ironic smile passed over his lips. "Whence come ye?" he asked, turning to Antony. "From the court of the Lord of all Russia, is it not so? Well, and how? hast thou cured the parrots, and the Great Prince's cats? The useful before the beautiful! So it ought to be. Cure them, cure them, fair leech; 'tis a better trade than to strain after the secrets of heaven! . . . And hast thou looked at the courtiers' tongues? Ha! Are they in a sound condition? . . . As of old—they are smeared with honey when they have to tell a bitter truth; as of old—with gall, when they have to defend the disgraced . . . I could sprinkle them with unslaked lime, I could tear them with red hot pincers till the day of judgment! . . . Pigmies! . . . What, Master Leech—thou who laddest out the water of life and death, hast thou come to look at the artist's humiliation—to laugh at him when the hand of ignorance hath destroyed, at one blow, all his brightest dreams, his strugglings towards heaven? . . . Look! admire! . . . Well, is it merry? . . . Laugh not too soon; wait a while, the same fate awaits thee!"

"We have come to comfort thee, to help thee with our love," said Antony, touched even to tears. "Dost thou not know thy children?"

"Help! . . . 'Tis too late!" . . . (Aristotle shook his head.) "I have no children . . . Look, there is my creation, my child!"—(he pointed to the torn fragments of a plan which were scattered around.) "This is its grave. Bury me with it, here beside it . . . Ay, the grave, nothingness, that is what awaits me! . . . I meant to build them a temple, a temple of God—do you mark me? But what do they want? They want cannon, bells, something larger, something better, something noisier, something more beautiful! Well, I make them a bell to ring out their ignorance to the whole world, to tell that they have lured me hither with a heavenly hope, and, instead of that, they have filled my eyes with dust and lime. I will cast them a cannon two versts long, I will level it at this miserable city of huts—it shall all be ruins, all in dust, living and dead! . . . Oh, then I shall be left alone! No man will hinder me from building my temple. I can yet collect its fragments: it is here yet," (Aristotle struck his fist against his forehead, and then against his breast,)—"here, while I live! Then from the ruins I will build a temple to the living God; let the nations come from afar and worship him in this boundless desert."

It was bitter to Andriousha to listen to his father's frenzied words. He sat down on a stone by his side, kissed his hand, and bathed it with his tears. Desiring to arrange his father's dress

as well as he could, and to render less remarkable the disorder of his exterior, which humiliated the old man in the eyes of the passengers, he took off as though for heat, his bonnet, in order to look like his father, and arranged the chain of gold. Aristotle glanced at him with tenderness—"Arrange it, arrange it, my child," he said, stroking his son's head: "This is the precious, the rich reward for burning bricks, for building bridges, for casting a great gun! I will leave it to thee as an inheritance, along with the name of founder and bricklayer!" . . . (After thinking awhile, and shaking his head.) "It was not such a reward as I thought of when I journeyed hither. A chain of undying years to adorn my name: the glorious name of Aristotle the Artist, the builder of the temple—that was the heritage I meant to leave thee." (He stopped and wept.) "I thank God, I restrained myself from making thee an artist. Dost thou remember, Antony, thou blamedst me for that?"

The leech beheld in his friend's weeping a favourable symptom; pleased, too, that the conversation had turned on Andriousha, he hastened to keep it up. "I blamed thee not, my good friend," said he; "but I only asked thee about the destination of thy son. Be not ungrateful for the mercies of the Creator; he hath been generous to the family of Fioraventi in great gifts. Thy brother is a famous leech; Italy, the promised land of the beautiful, accounts thee a great artist; to thy son hath fallen the warrior's lot. Who can tell with what glorious deed he will fulfill that destiny! Thou hast assuredly acted reasonably in giving him a path, which will be opened so wide by Fate herself, and by his noble character. It is not for all to travel the same road."

At this moment the sky was covered by a cloud, the wind whistled as if just freed from confinement, and began to pierce the artist. He felt his head. Andriousha anticipated him, and gave him a bonnet, which he had carried after his father when he had quitted the house, and had then placed not far from him, among the stones. Aristotle covered his head.

"There will be a smart shower," said his son.

"Let us take shelter under my roof," suggested Antony, giving his hand to the artist. The latter did not resist, and in silence, like an obedient child, followed him, first throwing a wistful glance at the fragments of the plan. He seemed to grieve that they should be wetted in the rain. Andriousha understood his father's glance, collected the fragments, and carefully put them into his bosom.

"Ay, 'tis well, well done!" said Aristotle in a melancholy tone, as he followed his friend.

He remained to pass the night with Antony, and spent the next twenty-four hours in an agitated condition both of body and mind. His talk was for the most part incoherent. At length he appeared to return to himself; but when his senses came back, he began to bewail his destiny. Thus, or nearly in this fashion, did he speak to his young friend:—"Thou knowest not, Antony, what a life is that of an artist! While yet a child, he is agitated by heavy, incomprehensible thoughts: to him the sphynx, Genius, hath already proposed its enigma; in his bosom the Promethean vulture is perched, and groweth with his growth. His comrades are playing and making merry; they are preparing for their riper years recollections of childhood's days of paradise—childhood, that

never can be but once: the time cometh, and he remembereth but the tormenting dreams of that age. Youth is at hand; for others 'tis the time of love, of soft ties, of revelry—the feast of life; for the artist, none of these. Solitary, flying from society, he avoideth the maiden, he avoideth joy; plunging into the loneliness of his soul, he there, with indescribable mourning, with tears of inspiration, on his knees before his Ideal, imploreth her to come down upon earth to his frail dwelling. Days and nights he waiteth, and pineth after unearthly beauty. Woe to him if she doth not visit him, and yet greater woe to him if she doth! The tender frame of youth cannot bear her bridal kiss; union with the gods is fatal to man; and the mortal is annihilated in her embrace. I speak not of the education, of the mechanical preparation. And here at every step the Material enchaineth thee, buildeth up barriers before thee: marketh a formless vein upon thy block of marble, mingling soot with thy carmine, entangling thy imagination in a net of monstrous rules and formulas, commandeth thee to be the slave of the house-painter or of the stone-cutter. And what awaiteth thee, when thou hast come forth victorious from this mechanic school—when thou hast succeeded in throwing off the heavy sum of a thousand unnecessary rules, with which pedantry hath overwhelmed thee—when thou takest as thy guide only those laws which are so plain and simple? . . . What awaiteth thee, then? Again the Material! Poverty, need, forced labour, appreciators, rivals, that ever-hungry flock which flieth upon thee ready to tear thee in pieces, as soon as it knoweth that thou art a pure possessor of the gift of God. Thy soul burneth to create, but thy carcass demandeth a morsel of bread; inspiration veileth her wing, but the body asketh not only to clothe its nakedness with a decent covering, but fine cloth, silk, velvet, that it may appear before thy judges in a proper dress, without which they will not receive thee, thou and thy productions will die unknown. In order to obtain food, clothes, thou must *work*: a merchant will order from thee a cellar, a warehouse; the signore, stables and dog-kennels. Now at last thou hast procured thyself daily bread, a decent habit for thy bones and flesh: inspiration thirsteth for its nourishment, demanding from thy soul images and forms. Thou createst, thou art bringing thy Ideal to fulfilment. How swiftly move the wheels of thy being! Thy existence is tenfold redoubled, thy pulse is beating as when thou breathest the atmosphere of high mountains. Thou spendest in one day whole months of life. How many nights passed without sleep, how many days in ceaseless chain, all filled with agitation! Or rather, there is no day nor night for thee, nor seasons of the year, as for other men. Thy blood now boileth, then freezeeth; the fever of imagination wasteth thee away. Triumph setteth thee on fire, the fear of failure maddeneth thee, tearing thee to pieces, tormenting thee with dread of the judgments of men; then again ariseth the terror of dying with the task unfinished. Add, too, the inevitable shade of glory, which stalketh ever in thy footsteps, and giveth thee not a moment of repose. This is the period of creation! While creating, thou hast been dwelling at the footstool of God. Crushed by thy contact with the hem of his garment, overwhelmed by inspiration from Him whom the world can scarcely bear, a poor mortal, half alive, half dead, thou descend-

est upon earth, and carriest with thee what thou hast created *there*, in *His* presence! Mortals surround thy production, judging, valuing, discussing it in detail; the patron laudeth the ornaments, the grandeur of the columns, the weight of the work; the distributors of favour gamble away thy honour, or creep like mice under thy plan, and nibble at it in the darkness of night. No, my friend, the life of an artist is the life of a martyr."

Thus spoke Aristotle, without giving Antony time to reply, which he several times attempted to do. As soon as he grew calmer, the young man ventured to answer him as follows: "Thou hast drawn an unenviable picture of the artist's life! Allow me to say, thou hast selected only the dark side of the painting. Two or three questions, and I have done."

"I await them."

"When creating, or, as thou hast justly expressed it, when dwelling at the footstool of sublime beauty, catching at the hem of its garment, hast thou not enjoyed in one moment bliss which the common mortal cannot purchase with his whole life? Hast thou not, when embodying thy Ideal, had sweet, had heavenly moments, which thou wouldst not exchange for all the treasures of the world? Hast thou not been happy in the remembrance of these moments? Is it little that thou hast been gifted by God? . . . Art thou not far above millions of thy fellow-creatures? . . . Thou sinnest, my friend!"

"'Tis true, 'tis true, Antonio!" cried the artist with feeling, pressing his friend's hand; "all this I have enjoyed. And if I had to begin my life again, if I had the choice of the pleasures of the rich man, the conqueror, the king, or of my past joys, I would again choose the latter, again I would follow the artist's peaceful path. Yes, that hath been given to me which was necessary for me, that which my soul required even before its appearance in the world. But—man is a strange being; selfishness, love of glory, call it how thou wilt, driveth him to frenzy. He is not content with enjoying his own creation himself—he desireth that others, that millions enjoy it also; he is not content with the praises of his contemporaries—he desireth that posterity, future generations, future ages, bow down before him. Unsatisfied with the shortness of his life, he pineth to live beyond the grave. Dead, beneath the tombstone, he heareth neither praise nor judgment; but he tormenteth himself here, to escape the one, and to enjoy the other, dreaming that his name will go from mouth to mouth, when he is sleeping in the dust."

"A noble dream!" said Antony. "Without it, what would distinguish man from the beast? Without it, the earth would want its best ornament—humanity its best achievements."

"Well, well, my friend! We had ended where we ought to have began. What is the good of the pining after the beautiful without fulfilment—the lofty, noble desire to live through ages, the feeling of self-knowledge, the strength of soul, the gifts of heaven, the power of creating a worthy immortality, when there is no possibility of realizing thy creations in worthy, eternal forms? . . . The material, the vile material, is what tortureth me, agonizeth me, driveth me to frenzy! . . . Hear, and condemn me, if I deserve it. I told thee, with what lofty, what ardent hopes, I bent my course to Muscovy; what rich offers I refused, in order to realize those hopes. Neither the friendship of the Döge Mar-

celli, nor the pressing invitations of other Italian sovereigns, nor the prayers of my friends and kinsmen, nor a future in an unknown land, with which they frightened me—nothing could stop me. I left my fatherland with its blessed sky. I came to a distant country, at the very extremity of the world, buried in mountains of snow, attracted by the promises with which they flattered my heart, and by my own confidence, that here I could enjoy facilities for *my work*, such as I had hitherto only dared to hope. Here, a solitary artist, caressed by the government, enjoying the love, the respect of a religious nation, ready to make any sacrifices for my church, I dreamed that I might realize my creation quicker than elsewhere. At last I am here. Thou knowest what mental services it cost me to obtain the favour of the Great Prince. I served him like a day-labourer; my face was singed with gunpowder, my back was bent before its time in the vault, my hands were horn with toil. It was, however, by such labours that I reached the apogée of the Tsar's favour. And the love of the people, of the mob, I acquired so far as to receive myself their contributions for the building of the church. My son, whom I had given to this nation as a pledge of my devotedness, my trust in it, whom I had caused to adopt the Russian faith—my aid in warfare, my austere life, my preparation of rough materials, the cannons and the bells I cast, even my title of Church-builder—all procured me the respect and love of the Russians. I had prepared a great quantity of materials for the church, and could continue to prepare yet more at the time of construction; ten thousand bricks are brought every day for nothing from my kilns. The boyárin who possesses houses around the Assumption are voluntarily pulling them down to give room for the church: 'for the foundations of the house of God we are ready to lay down our bodies,' they say—'this is different from pulling down churches to make room for gardens.' I can dispose, too, of thousands of zealous hands. Iván's treasury, enriched by triumphs in which I have had no small share, would open every means for me. All—even the recent success of the reduction of Tver, authorized me to approach the execution of my creation. There was wanting but the word of Iván—*Let it be so.* Well, the day before yesterday I received an order to present my plan to him. I take it. The Great Prince himself, Sophia, and a high ecclesiastical personage, were my judges. With a trembling heart I unroll my plans, I explain them. . . . I behold displeasure upon Iván's face; still more on the countenance of the ecclesiastic; Sophia looked at me with compassion and a lively interest. 'For God's sake,' said the Great Prince, 'what is this that thou wouldst build us?' 'A cathedral of the Mother of God, such as would be worthy of her,' replied I. 'A cathedral?' cried Iván, 'we want a house of God; but what is this thou hast made us? . . . Hast thou been to Vladimir, hast thou seen the cathedral church there?' 'I have been there, and have seen it.' 'Build us one like that, Master Aristotle, only somewhat larger and thicker; that is for Vladimir, and ours must be fit for Moscow—dost thou understand? For this we will thank ye, in the name of all orthodox Russia, and we will not leave thee unrewarded.' 'If so, why didst thou invite a celebrated master from Venice?' I said, with indignation, rolling up my plan. 'Thou mightest have ordered any bricklayer to build

it!' 'Now thou art angered! Hold, show me thy paper again,' and he began again to examine it. 'As thou wilt, but we understand it not—we understand it not. It looks, even on paper, ready to tumble down.' At this moment the ecclesiastic looked at the plan, and exclaimed—'Tis exactly a Latin chapel!' 'It is not at least a Jewish school,' I cried. The priest turned pale. Sophia began to defend me, saying that such a church would be the wonder of foreigners, that the cathedral at Constantinople in honour of her patron saint could hardly be compared to it for beauty and grandeur. The Great Prince shook his head, and thought awhile. 'And how many fathoms dost thou need for thy church?' he asked. 'Two hundred,' said I. 'Two hundred? thou art mad, Aristotle! Why, then, the boyarins' houses must be levelled, the ancient churches must come down.' 'The izbas of thy boyarins, and the chapels which you call churches, assuredly must come down. Thou thyself wert pulling them down for the gardens. If thou wouldst be a great sovereign, thou must do what is great, and worthy of the admiration of the world.' 'Well; but where are we to find so many bricks?' 'In my kilns there are already a great many ready; I will prepare more.' 'Where am I to get bricks for the Kreml? Forget not, I must build a wall, gates, towers.' 'Where thou wilt, my lord, but I have prepared the bricks for the Cathedral of Our Lady, and not for thy Tartar towers.' 'No, this cannot be,' cried Iván, enraged; 'thou art mad, Aristotle—thou hast a fever-fit. I have done much to please thee, but this cannot be—'tis impossible. Canst thou bend an oak into a bow, and then expect it to grow up to heaven? All Russia is but newly fledged, and thou wouldst pluck it of its last feather. Be angry or not, I will that the Cathedral of Our Lady be built on the model of the church of Vladimir, only rather more spacious and thicker: that it be a church, not a temple, not a Latin chapel.' 'Thou hast many Italian architects, command them.' 'I will that thou build it.' 'I will not.' 'I will have thee in chains,' shouted Iván, striking his staff on the ground, and devouring me with his burning eyes: 'thou shalt build it in chains.' 'I will build my temple in chains, if thou wilt.' 'I want a church on the model of that of Vladimir.' 'I will not.' 'What, dost thou not know me?' 'I know thee, but I will not.' I thought he would have struck me with his staff; but he only shook it at me without striking. I went out from his presence, clapping the door behind me. And this is the end of all my painful toils for this ruler; this is the fruit of my inspiration, the fulfilment of my fondest hopes! . . . Is it not enough to drive one mad?"

"As far as I can see, thou hast mistaken the Great Prince, mistaken as to his means and those of Russia," said Antony, taking on this occasion the part of counsellor. "With greatness of soul thou hast unthinkingly attributed to him a love for the fine arts which we are accustomed to find in the princes of Italy. Let a savage, be he as wise as you will, pass from his hut into a marble palace, will he not be terrified and repelled by it? . . . Now, if my wish be not too presumptuous, permit me to see thy plans. Trust them to the judgment, not of my knowledge, but of my love for the beautiful, and of a cool reason. It may be, that acquaintance with the great monuments of architecture in Italy, acquaintance with great artists, may have formed

my taste so far that I may by feeling understand what others understand by science."

The artist, now tranquilized, consented with pleasure to his young friend's proposition. The fragments of the plan, which were not numerous, were instantly placed together on the table, and united with paste. But just as Antony had put them together, and was examining them, there presented himself a messenger from the Great Prince. His business was to the leech alone; and he called him into the hall. Here he explained that Iván Vassilievitch was extremely anxious about the artist's health, whom he was afraid of losing, and gave command to Antony to present himself with a satisfactory account, (i. e., with the tidings that Aristotle was rapidly recovering—it was Antony's business to make the sick well: he might die himself, but the patient must recover, particularly when the Lord of All Russia commanded.) "Now, this fever-fit," said the messenger, "is not the first that hath happened. Once Iván Vassilievitch pulled down two or three izbás close to the Assumption, and the palace-master became quiet again. But this time our Lord can do no more; pull down, you see, all the izbás, all the churches and houses in the town! Judge thyself, as a reasonable man, is it possible?" Antony could not help smiling when he heard the simple explanation; but at the same time he received new conviction that his friend's demands exceeded the possibility of satisfying them. He assured the messenger that the artist was out of danger, promising to afford him the necessary help in case of need, and instantly to present himself to the Great Prince.

On returning to his chamber, he found the artist with his face a little more cheerful. Whether it was the enquiry from the Great Prince which had given Aristotle fresh hope, (he could not but be sure that that message was about him), or the examination of his plan, which had effected such a change for the better, or perhaps both these causes at once, the leech found a smile upon his lips. But little by little the smile vanished away, and fresh clouds gathered upon his brow. "Thou art right, Antonio," he cried; "I am a madman!"

Antony began to examine the plan. What he saw, language can never describe. Perhaps an edifice, like the Temple of St. Peter at Rome, perhaps a Christian Pantheon, a Divina Commedia in stone. Familiar with the highest productions of architecture in Italy, he had prepared his imagination for something extraordinary; but he saw that Aristotle's building outstripped imagination and possibility. Long he stood before the drawings, quite unable to give any account of his impressions.

The portico of the temple was gloomy; as soon as you entered it, you were surrounded by a religious awe; all there was expressive of the weight of sin, humiliation, despondency, contrition. Gigantic quadrangular columns, composed of huge stones, rudely hewn, and speckled with the moss of ages, besprinkled with the mouldiness of time, piled in a wondrous harmonious disorder, seemed as though raised by the almighty arm of nature, and not of man; from vaults, of similar proportions to the columns, sternly looked forth colossal statues of stone, and seemed preparing to crush you: the hollow murmur of prayer would resound along these vaults like a breath from the frail bosom—not of one man, but of all humanity. Through

moderately large openings, scattered irregularly here and there, the sunbeams in two or three spots sparingly dropped their light, now on the divine image of the crucified Saviour, now on his grave-clothes, now on the face of the Magdalen, bedewed with tears. But the further you advanced into the interior of the temple, the lighter, brighter, more cheerful it became: here proportions, forms, images, cast off their fetters, more air was admitted, all glimmered in the half light of hope, and the trust in immortality. At length, as you approached the last apartment, you seemed to tread down the earth from beneath your feet, and plunge into a kind of holy immensity. There dwelt blessing; there all was ether, harmony, brilliancy, and joy. Words cannot describe what Antony felt as he gazed upon the plan of the wondrous threefold temple.

"No!" cried the young man, after a long pause, with an enthusiasm he was not able to conceal; "no, great artist, thou createst not for this age, but for centuries which are to come hereafter, when the power of Archimedes' lever will replace thousands of men. Even the imagination is hardly able to embrace the immensity of this edifice, and, dumb with astonishment, falleth prostrate before it. What would be the effect if it were executed? . . . Pardon me, if I tell thee a bitter truth . . . the Russian sovereign is right, a hundred times right! If he could reach the grandeur of this edifice, he would still more fully understand the impossibility of realizing it. Cast away, while it is yet time, thy hopes—thine idea far exceedeth possibility. And is it not ever thus? What heaven hath created, earth cannot execute."

Pale, trembling, Aristotle listened to him, as if he were hearing his sentence of death. He had prepared himself for this verdict; and yet, when he heard it, he could not return to reason.

"Filled with the sublime visions of genius, a dweller in heaven coming down to our poor world," continued the young man, taking the artist's cold hand and pressing it, "thou hast mistaken our earthly calculations, our proportions. Still greater hath been thine error, in dreaming of realizing thy building here, in Russia, in these days. Thou wonderest that they understand thee not here; is it surprising? Thou art come too soon. Think, Iván is gifted with a mighty soul, with a will of iron: he can conquer time and circumstances, but he is not almighty . . . Can he inspire himself with the feeling of the beautiful—an ardent love for it, so far as to adopt thy work *now*? Can he sacrifice to it the wealth of his treasury—can he renounce other objects, which he considers more profitable and important? Is he to devote thousands of his people's arms, thousands of his boyárens' houses, and churches which orthodox Moscow counts so precious? In him the idea of strength, consisting in uniting into one the scattered parts of a vast whole, fulfils its destination: but the idea of the beautiful is unintelligible to him, or is conceived but dimly, and always under the forms of strength, of firmness, of variety. Listen to me: diminish the proportions of thy plan a third, if not a half, and even then the genius of the beautiful will recognise thy production as his own; posterity will admire it. But even in this case, prepare the Russian sovereign for the experiment by a building such as Iván and his people have commanded—if not according to the idea of the beautiful, yet according to the idea

of the vast—and let this be the mediator between the Russians and thyself. Build them first a church as a peace-maker. It will be a new sacrifice from thee to the Russian people. And then, reducing the proportions of thy temple, select a site for it not in the Kremlin, but on one of the heights in the neighbourhood of Moscow. Then, full master of thy plan, assisted by human resources, and with the help of God, raise thyself an immortal monument. For this thou mayest take Iván's word."

"Iván's word!" . . . cried Aristotle, and sobbed like a child.

"What I have been saying to thee, till now, I said to thy reason. Now, I turn to thy heart. In refusing to build a church to Our Lady, dost thou not deprive her of one of her altars? There, where thousands might be worshipping, where they might be bringing her worthy offerings, wilt thou leave a place of desolation, of disorder, of uncleanness? What is become of the feeling of Christian humility? . . . Oh, my friend! what hast thou done with that feeling of piety which ever distinguished thee?"

These words penetrated the artist with inexpressible terror.

"Yes, I was a madman!" he cried; "imagination obscured my reason, selfishness destroyed in me all that was good, all that was holy; it was no temple to the Lord that I wished to create, but to myself, not to Our Lady—I desired to be worshipped in it myself! . . . I am worse than an idolater! I am like the Israelites, who, knowing the true God, fell down before the golden calf. Thou hast restored me to my senses, my young but reasonable friend. Yes! I will make a peace-offering; but not to the Great Prince, not to the Russian people, but to the Mother of God. To her I make a vow to build a church as they command me to build it, and not as I wished to construct it in my selfishness, (the artist crossed himself.) Look down, most Holy Mother, with a merciful eye upon my contrition, and take pity on me, a miserable sinner, from thy heavenly throne!"

Trembling with a holy enthusiasm, he seized his plan and tore it into small pieces, and then fell sobbing before the image of the Virgin. Long he lay prostrate on the ground, and when he arose his face was bright. He embraced his young friend, kissed his son with tenderness, like a man returning home from a distant and painful journey. The crisis was terrible, but it was over. The voice of religion had done what neither the stern power of the Prince could do, nor the strength of friendship, nor the arguments of reason.

"Now," said Aristotle, turning with firmness to the leech, "go to the Great Prince, and tell him, that I, not fearing chains, but to fulfill a vow to the Holy Virgin, will begin to-morrow to construct a church on the model of that at Vladimir."

The news of Aristotle's recovery from the fever-fit, as the Russians called these attacks, gratified Iván Vassilievitch. He had been alarmed lest his engineer and church-builder should go out of his mind; and that, too, while he was still needful to him! The artist, perhaps, was among that number of madmen of genius, who ought to be shut up, along with Tasso and Beethoven, in Bedlam. But it must be remarked that there were not, at this period, any houses for the care of the insane. Iván Vassilievitch could not disguise his joy: he thanked the leech

more than once, and gave him a promise, when Aristotle had completed the Church of the Assumption as he, the Great Prince, desired, to give him any site he pleased out of the town, and the assistance of his treasury, for a new church, which the architect was to build after his own fashion, provided he would reduce the proportions of his plan.

On the next day, with the proper religious ceremonies, the first stone was laid of the foundation of the cathedral Church of the Assumption. Immediately afterwards Aristotle began to construct it on the model of the church at Vladimir. He remarked with delight, that the type of this edifice was to be found in Venice, namely, in the church of St. Mark. But the struggle which had given him the victory of religious will over love of glory and his fondest hopes had been so strong, that it laid him on a sickbed, from which he was with difficulty raised by the care of his friendly physician, and his beloved son.

In such circumstances how could Antony think of his own hopes? And whom could he take to assist him in his plans of marriage, rather than Aristotle? . . . The artist's recovery must decide his fate.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE RECEPTION OF THE EMBASSY.

In Moscow and the neighbouring villages was an unusual stir. Constables, guards, and retainers, are galloping from morn till night, and *driving out* the people. The Russian peasant is always delighted to stare, for days together, even at what he does not understand, so long as he has no work to do; and on this occasion they drove him with the stick into the city to make holiday for a whole four-and-twenty hours. Thousands are streaming from all parts, and they will lie heavy on old Moscow's heart; she will be stifled! With this populace they intended to make a show of the strength of Muscovy.

And at the Great Prince's court there is no less bustle. On the morrow is to be the reception of the imperial ambassador. In the Russian Tsar, for such Iván Vassilievitch had begun to style himself, was already developed the feeling of his own and his people's dignity; and therefore, in his relations with the imperial ambassador, who was arrogant and presumptuous, the courtiers of the Great Prince had higgled and bargained for the least advantage. Several days running, the boyarins had presented themselves at the ambassador's dwelling, to discuss the ceremonies of introduction, presentation, sitting down, standing up, kissing of hands, the number of reverences, the one step backwards or forwards, and almost of the privilege of sneezing. They had ascertained what Poppel would say, and took their measures to prepare a fitting answer. Poppel demanded that the Great Prince should give him an audience alone—this was refused. At last, when all was arranged on both sides, the day was fixed for the reception.

The minds, or rather the imaginations, of the people were occupied with the splendid reception of ambassadors, as though with festivals. But, under the mask of the bustle of a ceremonial, the Founder of Russia was preparing the way for a new triumph. He secured a whole province without the sword, without leagues or treaties.

There had arrived at his court a guest from

Ouglitch, his own brother, Andrei Vassilievitch the elder. The stranger was received with splendid and unsparing hospitality. As soon as he arrived, he passed the whole evening with the Great Prince in gay and open conversation. He had expected displeasure for not having sent to Moscow a band of auxiliaries against the Tsars of the Horde. Nothing was mentioned on the subject; never before had he been so affectionately received, never had the Great Prince talked so unreservedly to him. On the next day he was invited with the boyarins to dinner. Ivan Vassilievitch met him, seated him in the place of honour, overwhelmed him with caresses, and a friendship so skilfully assumed, that the Prince of Ouglitch took these false jewels for real. In the eyes, in the language of his host, not even a shade of treachery was to be discerned. He did not betray himself till the end. This drama was played in the Western Izba, which really was so named because it looked towards the setting sun; but henceforward, it was to be associated with the setting of the unfortunate prisoner's sun of happiness. It was now time to let the trap fall on the incautious victim. Ivan Vassilievitch went out into the audience-chamber, and returned no more. It was the hour fixed for the banquet. Those who were invited to the feast were splendidly entertained. In the dining-hall, the courtiers of Andrei Vassilievitch were assembled under a guard. Suspecting nothing, he was waiting till they should come to announce that dinner was served. And some Muscovite boyarins appeared. One of them* seemed desirous of communicating something to him, but was unable; tears prevented him from speaking. At last, with frequent interruptions from them, he said—"My lord, Prince Andrei Vassilievitch, thou art the prisoner of God, and of the Lord Great Prince, Ivan Vassilievitch, of All Russia, thine elder brother." Andrei changed colour, arose from his place, but speedily recovering himself, said, with firmness—"God's will be done, and that of the Prince, my brother; but the Lord will judge between us, that I am unjustly deprived of liberty." Leaving his brother's hospitable palace, the unfortunate prince exchanged his province Ouglitch for a dungeon and for chains.

On the same day there was spread through Moscow a rumour of the imprisonment of the Prince of Ouglitch. It filled with horror the small number of good men, who feared not openly to condemn this proceeding of the Great Prince. But the greater number, the mob, which never reasons, were against the unhappy prisoner, calling him traitor, betrayer, the foe of the church and of his country. The courtiers of Ivan Vassilievitch took care to instil into the ears of the people reports that the Prince of Ouglitch had been detected in a correspondence with the Polish king, to whom he had promised the head of Ivan Vassilievitch: that he had come expressly for this to Moscow, with a great number of boyarins; that he had actually arrived at the Great Prince's palace, and that he had made an attempt on his elder brother's life, but that this had failed, from the infidelity of one of his people. Then they recalled his former offences against Moscow, long ago forgotten and forgiven. Of his services to Moscow, no one mentioned a single word. And thus it was no wonder that the majority was on the side of power

rather than on that of justice. On the following day a spectacle was prepared for the gaping mob, and the unfortunate prisoner was soon forgotten. He had none to plead his cause but God.

In the evening of the same day on which the Prince of Ouglitch had been seized and thrown into fetters, Antony the leech was summoned to the Great Prince. He found Ivan Vassilievitch in an agitated state.

"Hark ye, leech," said the Great Prince, "my brother is dying; save him, for God's sake!"

Antony promised to do all he could.

"He is my brother, though he hath behaved ill to me," continued the Great Prince, "even though he hath attempted my life, hath reached at Moscow: therefore is he cast into irons—but I would not that any fatal harm should fall upon him; God see'th I would not. I only would teach him, punish him, as a father punisheth. I wish the good of Moscow and of my brothers. Who will care for them if not I? Am not I the eldest of the house? And Andrei and I have grown up together from our cradle."

Here he wept feigned tears. But his fear was real. He dreaded lest Andrei Vassilievitch should die on the first day of his imprisonment, and that his death might attract suspicion upon himself. To cut a throat, to strangle, to poison—these methods he never adopted with his prisoners; he counted such a deadly sin. Ordinarily he killed them by the slow death of chains, leaving their lives to God: this was no sin! . . . "I will keep him a month or two, and let him go," said he to the leech; "he may go where he will. Though he be wicked, he is yet of my blood! . . . Save him, Antony! I will never forget thy services. I will find thee a bride after thine own heart . . . I will give thee lands . . . Save my soul from a great disgrace. The dvoretzkoï here will conduct thee to Andrei Vassilievitch."

Antony was thunderstruck by the hint about the bride . . . Was it possible that the Great Prince already knew of his love for Anastasia? Who could have told him of it? . . . It was, however, impossible to indulge in wonder for a long time: he hurried to the prisoner, whom he found in a dangerous state. The Prince of Ouglitch had borne bravely the first blow, but when he sounded the depth of his misfortune, when he compared the future which awaited him, with the lot of former important prisoners of his brother, he was terrified with that future. All his blood had rushed to his heart . . . It is not our business to describe the measures taken by Antony to relieve the unfortunate prince: suffice it to say, that by the power of medical remedies he succeeded, in spite of the patient's opposition, in affording him the necessary relief. Perhaps he was to blame in prolonging his dungeon life for two years more.

Brightly and gaily had the guest from Ouglitch arisen on the horizon of Moscow, like the young moon; and, like the young moon, speedily did he sink beneath it. And on his lonely death-bed the only farewell voice was the clink of the fetters.

The speedy aid afforded to the Prince of Ouglitch, raised the leech in the eyes of the Russian sovereign. He still continued to hold him in high honour; gifts followed gifts, and gave an additional value to words of favour. Antony profited by these favours to beg some indulgence for the unhappy prisoner. His fetters were re-

* The Prince Semeon Ivanovitch Riapolofskoi. — *Note of the Author.*

moved for a while; but as soon as he recovered they were put on again. They assured Antony that he was altogether relieved from them, and from that time forward, the leech was not permitted to visit the prisoner.

Between the acts of this cruel drama they performed the reception of the ambassador. From his lodging Poppel was conducted in an extensive circuit through the best streets, the Great Street, Varskoi Street, the Red Square, and the chief street in the city. All this was crammed with the people, as close as the seeds in a sunflower. Room was only left for the ambassador's train, his attendants, and his guard of honour. Every window was crowded with living faces; the walls were threaded with heads, as in the enchanted castle; the roofs were sown with groups of people. All Moscow was streaming from its outskirts and suburbs to its heart.

"Silence! they are playing on the kettle-drum! They come, they come!" resounded through the people, and this cry passed in a few moments from the ambassador's palace to the *water-side halls*, where the reception was to take place. Breasts were jammed against breasts, backs were squeezed down with tremendous weight, complaints and cries arose. "Never mind! they come, they come!" and then streamed on the procession. At the head came a horseman beating on plates of brass; behind him came pouring a glittering stream of chosen horsemen in helmet and cuirass, with sword and spear. Beyond them extended in two lines a number of boyarins, with the immoveably important air of mandarins, in rich dresses, on which the sun played, and reflected his beams. Some of them seemed as if they were carrying on thick cushions bushy beards, combed hair upon hair, so fat were they. And there is the imperial ambassador himself. He wears a beret of crimson velvet, placed jauntily aside, with a plume of waving feathers, confined by a buckle of precious stones: skilfully arranged is the drape of his velvet mantle, bordered round the edge with gold lace. Poppel, with eyes half-shut in haughtiness, and with his hand placed coquettishly at his girdle, sits proudly upon a steed loaded with glittering caparisons, and perpetually provokes his mettle with his spurs. And in reality you might have put him into a frame, and exhibited him in the market-place as a perfect picture of an equestrian figure! 'Tis the brightest, noblest moment of his life! The triumphal entry of Trajan into Rome after his Dacian victory—the bridge of Arcola—the summit of the Pyramids for Napoleon! Behind him came his train, in dresses which yielded in beauty and splendour to the ambassador's habit, as the moon yields to the sun. The envoy and his suite were without arms—a custom insisted on by the suspicious character of the Russians. At the end of the procession again came boyarins in two lines.

All this train was to stop in front of the *water-side halls*. The knight Poppel had desired to ride up to the very staircase; but as the Great Prince alone had the privilege of dismounting at the *red stairs*, the arrangers of the procession had so skilfully crowded the people at this spot, that the proud knight was compelled to dismount from his horse exactly where he had been ordered. At the bottom of the stone steps he was met by the *okólnitchie* with low reverences, who shook him by the hand, (a custom borrowed from the foreigners,) and with the usual saluta-

tion in the name of his lord. At the middle of the staircase was a boyárin who performed the same ceremony; at the entrance to the hall, the deacon Koufizín, who conducted Poppel into the antechamber. Inferior attendants of the Great Prince met and conducted the ambassador's train. But here the procession suddenly stopped. A slight confusion took place; discussions began among the boyárins; and a murmur arose like the buzzing of bees, when the smoke drives them out amid their toil. It was suddenly discovered that one of the boyárins had put on a *kaftán* that did not belong to his particular rank, and had taken a wrong place. Then the *dvoretzkoí* humbly entreated the ambassador and his suite to return to the staircase and recommence the ceremony. Vexed and mortified, the knight was compelled to perform the great *Castellan's* request. The procession was completely repeated. At the first palace, separated from the apogee of the train only by a door, the deacon Kouritzín stopped it. Here there stood, on both sides, the retainers and the inferior ranks of the nobles, glittering in dresses of state, which had been given out to them from the stores of the Great Prince. It seemed to the foreigners as if they had entered the enchanted palace, where people were turned to stone, so motionless stood the attendants, without so much as winking—so deep was the silence. The stoppage continued some minutes longer, during which nothing was heard but the impatient tinkle of the knight's spurs. At last the door opened, and the ambassador and his suite received permission to enter the *new palace*. On both sides, in two lines, stood boyárins, looking like sheaves of gold. At the extremity of the hall, but not distinguished by any ornament except that of several rich images, and elevated on a number of steps, rose a throne of nut-tree wood, all carved, of fine Greek work. Above it blazed an image in the rays of precious gems; at the footstool the double-headed eagle already displayed its wings. The canopy, supported on carved columns, was in the form of a pyramid. At the sides of the throne stood two benches covered with drapery of cloth of gold, embroidered with lions. On one lay a bonnet, blazing with pearls and precious gems, and on the other an enchased staff or sceptre, a cross, a silver wash-hand basin, and two ewers and napkins. A few paces backward, a single bench was left empty, and near it an empty *stoyantze*.* The Great Prince was habited in a *kaftán* of state, a silver ground with green leaves upon it, a gipon of yellow satin, a collar of diamonds and topazes; on his breast hung a cross of cypress-wood, containing relics: his feet, clothed in shoes embroidered in gold on a ground of white kid leather, rested on a velvet footstool. Amid the crowd of all these persons and things, amid the splendour of rich dresses, you were transfixed by the lightning eye of the Russian sovereign. Poppel had already beheld those eyes more than once; but even now he could not bear their thrilling glance, and bent his own upon the ground. A few paces forward, and—again a stoppage, as if in order to prepare him for the honour of seeing the illustrious countenance of Iván. At length the ambassador was

* Antiquaries are still undecided as to the meaning of this word *stoyantze*, some supposing it to mean a kind of cupboard or niche, others a low table.

"Non nostrum est tantas componere lites."

conducted to the steps of the throne. Here Kouritzin, turning to the Great Prince with a low reverence, said—"My lord, Great Sovereign of All Russia, the knight Nicholas Poppel, ambassador from the Roman Cæsar, maketh obeisance to thee; vouchsafe him to do salutation from his sovereign." The Great Prince nodded his head, and the deacon communicated the permission to the envoy. Having made salutation from the Emperor Frederick III., and the Austrian King Maximilian, Poppel ascended the second step of the throne and knelt. Iván Vassilievitch arose, "and enquired concerning the health of the most illustrious and illuminated Frederick, the Roman Cæsar, and the Karkoussian king, and others his right well beloved allies, and gave his hand to the ambassador standing, and commanded him to sit upon the bench, close over against himself." His hand, defiled by the kiss of a Roman Catholic, was purified by washing; the service was performed by the dvoretzkoï. Immediately after, the ambassador and all his attendants took their seats on the benches. After remaining seated a short time, he arose, and the boyárin followed his example. Then was delivered the *letter of trust* (credentials) on a damask cushion. The Great Prince made a movement as if to touch it with his hand, but without doing so gave a sign to the deacon, who took the letter and laid it on a cushion in the empty *stoyantze*. Then the deacon, again turning to Iván Vassilievitch with the usual obeisance, proclaimed—"Lord, Great Prince of All Russia, the ambassador from the Cæsar maketh obeisance to thee with presents from his lord." The Great Prince made a gracious signal to the ambassador, and the imperial attendants, one after the other, presented on bended knee a collar and necklace of gold, fifteen Muscovite ells of velvet of Venice, "dark blue and fine;" for the *first-born* son of the Great Prince *linen*, velvet of cramoisine and gold, with a lining of blue *camelotte*." For the gifts the ambassador was ordered to give thanks to his highness. At last, with the same ceremonies, the ambassador was commanded to speak in the name of his sovereign. At this moment Iván Vassilievitch arose from his throne, and made several steps forward.

Poppel spoke as follows—"I entreat discretion and secrecy. If thine enemies, the Poles and Bohemians, knew concerning what I am about to speak, my life would be in peril. We have heard that thou, most illustrious and thrice-puissant Iván, most mighty lord of Russia, hast demanded for thyself from the Pope the dignity of king," (at these words over Iván's countenance flitted a dark shade of displeasure.) "But know, that not the Pope, but the Emperor alone, can make kings, princes, and knights. If thou desirest to be a king," (Iván Vassilievitch retreated, and sat down indignantly on his throne; the harebrained Poppel, in repeating his words, made no change in them,) "then do I offer thee my services therein. It will be only needful to conceal this matter from the Polish king, who feareth that thou, when made a sovereign equal with himself, mayest take from him the lands anciently Russian." Every word proved that the ambassador understood neither the character of the ruler to whom he was addressing himself, nor the spirit of the people; that he was ignorant of the mere properties of time and place: every word betrayed Poppel's folly and inexperience. To this harangue our Iván replied firm-

ly, with a majestic voice, and without rising from the throne—"Thou askest us, whether we desire to be made by the Cæsar a king in our own land. Know, Sir Popleff, we have been, by God's grace, lords in our land from the beginning, from our first ancestors; we have our place from God; even as our forefathers had it, even so have we; and we ask God alone that he may grant to us and to our children to be even for ever, as we are now, lords in our land. But to hold it as vassals from any other we have never willed as yet, nor even now will we." The deacon Kouritzin repeated this speech to the interpreter. A terrible moment for Bartholomew! Not to translate with perfect accuracy, word for word, the speech of his formidable master to the imperial ambassador, was more than he dared, because the deacon understood tolerably well the German language; to translate it accurately would incense the ambassador. However, personal security, which he had often sacrificed to serve others, obtained the preference, and he, hesitating and trembling, performed his duty of interpreter. It was very easy for Poppel to understand, from Iván's wrathful eyes, the general purport of the speech.

Already these messengers of anger had agitated him. When he heard the substance of the speech he stood confused, like a schoolboy detected in a fault, for which he has been previously warned that he will be punished. His confusion was still further increased by a circumstance of the moment. When he, at the opening of his speech, made his bow to the Great Prince and his court, he remarked among the latter the countenance of a young boyárin which forcibly struck him. It was the exact image of the Baroness Ehrenstein in her younger days. The baroness never loved Poppel; this he well knew and well remembered. Her stern glance, in which he had ever read evident aversion—her harsh unfriendly words were inscribed upon his very heart. Now, at the triumphant moment of his life, it seemed as though she appeared before him in the palace of the Great Prince to spoil his triumph and to add to his confusion. In the young boyárin he beheld the same stern wrathful glance, the same expression of ill-will!

The knight, naturally insolent, here lost his self-possession altogether, and did not even attempt to find an answer, in order to repair, if possible, his mistake. In the eyes of Iván Vassilievitch was expressed the gratification of a triumph gained over a distinguished foreigner. Having enjoyed this triumph, he hastened to reassure the ambassador with gracious words; he had no wish to interrupt the friendship which he had but just established with the German states, the rather as he was well acquainted with the other propositions of the ambassador, which flattered his self-love. "This is no impediment," said Ivan, "to our good understanding with the Roman Cæsar. Therefore we have received the letter of trust and gifts from his highness and majesty with all love." These words, communicated in order through the deacon and interpreter, encouraged Poppel.

It is known that at this audience the ambassador, "in the name of Frederick, proposed that Ivan should give one of his daughters, Helena or Feodosia, to Albrecht, Markgraf of Baden, the Emperor's nephew, and that he should be allowed to see the bride." The Great Prince willingly accepted the proposal, and consented, in performance of this affair, to dispatch to the

Emperor, along with Poppel, an ambassador of his own. As to the desire of seeing the bride, Ivan Vassilievitch explained that the customs of Russia did not permit a maiden to be shown before the time to her bridegroom or his representative. Then came a request on the part of Poppel, that Ivan should forbid the people of Pskoff from passing into the lands of the "Livonian Germans," subjects of the Empire. The Great Prince ordered him to be answered—"That the men of Pskoff had lands of their own, and would not pass out into the territories of others." Thus were the political demands disposed of. The face of the young boyarin reminded the ambassador of his domestic affairs. He remembered the leech Ehrenstein; and in his desire to injure his uncle's kinsman, and the man he called his rival, his envious heart found a pretext for directing the conversation, such as, assuredly, he would never have been supplied with by a course of rhetoric so fertile in pretexts. He communicated to Ivan Vassilievitch the request "of his holy Cæsarian Majesty, to have some live animals, called in Russian *loss*, (*moose-deer*), if possible young, without horns, or with their horns filed, so that they could do no hurt; and one of the Bogouliats, who eat raw flesh. "These gifts his Cæsarian Majesty would count as singular favours" said Poppel. "In exchange, he promiseth to send thee a leech from his court, Master Leon, most skilful in the healing of all manner of diseases. He was no pretender, this leech, but right wise, learned—having the diploma of leech from the Emperor himself; famous not only in the imperial dominions, but even in foreign lands. And I am commanded by my most high and illustrious lord to say—Trust not too much to a leech who hath been sent to thee from the German lands." "How so?" asked Ivan. "He is an adventurer, a pretender, an igno!" . . .

At these words the young boyarin who had so much struck the knight by his resemblance to the Baroness Ehrenstein, seemed about to rush forward out of the line of the Russian courtiers: it was Antony himself. He flushed up and trembled with anger, when he heard the insulting speech of Poppel. His lips were about to utter, in the hearing of all, the word "liar;" but Aristo te, who was standing next to him, so strongly seized him by the arm and pressed it, the Great Prince so covered him with his fiery glance, and sternly raised his finger, that he restrained himself. . . . God knows, what an uproar Antony's fatal word might have produced in the assembly, and what a dreadful storm it might have called down upon his head. But when Ivan Vassilievitch had majestically restrained and dispelled the tempest, he himself arose in defence of the insulted—"It is not well in thee, Sir Nikolai Popleff," said he, "to speak evil of our court physician: his skill and devotion Antony has proved more than once by deeds. Antony is dear to us for ever, and, therefore, we hold him in our favour. And we neither want nor desire another leech. As to the Bogouliatm, who eateth raw flesh, and the young *losses*, Ivan Vassilievitch promiseth them right willingly. And, at the same time, he would request workmen, diggers of mines, and a miner who is skilled in separating gold and silver from the earth, and a skilful silver-master, who knoweth how to make great bowls and flagons, to enchase and carve the bowls." With this interchange of requests the audience concluded. The ambassador

was conducted away with the same honour as he had been introduced, if not even with more, as it was necessary to sweeten the bitterness of the answers that had been given him.

Infuriated by the failure of his diplomatic experiments, from which he had expected great favour, both with the Emperor and the Great Prince; infuriated at the failure of his attempt to overthrow Antony Ehrenstein in the estimation of the Russian ruler; pursued by the family resemblance between his foe and the baroness, Poppel cursed himself and his fate. Thus a poor fisherman, who has unsuccessfully cast his nets for days together, is ready almost to throw himself into the water. Amid these black thoughts, he was interrupted by a letter from Antony the leech; this was a challenge to single combat for personal insults. With trembling hand Poppel answered—"The knight, Nicolas Poppel, by adoption Baron Ehrenstein, girded with the sword by the hand of the Emperor, will never degrade himself so far as to take up the glove thrown down by a base quacksalver." "In that case," replied Antony, "the noble leech Ehrenstein gives him, a vile coward, a blow with his glove, which the most noble knight may show to his Emperor, as a proof that he is unworthy to bear his honourable title." Poppel received the box on the ear like a philosopher, in the hope of paying it back with a blow that should give more pain.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE.

"O my father, O my dearest sire!
Tell me why thou art offended, say,
With thy child, thy little daughter dear;
That thou givest her to stranger folk;
To a stranger folk she knoweth not;
To a stranger land, a land afar!
Hath she, then, so soon wearied thee?
That thou drivest her from thine eyes afar:
Have I worn out all my garments gay?
Have I eaten of the sugar'd cakes?
Have I drank the mead, the honey dew?
Have I trodden down the garden green?"

FROM the moment of Anastasia's visit to the beloved stranger, there had at times crept into her heart the feeling of having done wrong. She felt all the burden of a secret concealed from her father. At other moments she was continually haunted by the dark thought that she was enchanted by Antony; but this remorse, this dark idea, was soon put to flight by recollections of the sweet moments which love had afforded her. Now, the mere separation from Antony tormented her more than all. She longed for one more delicious interview with him, for one more maddening kiss! . . . All she thought of was, how she would be caressed by Antony, when she would belong to God and him alone.

His thoughts and feelings were elevated above earthly joy. Like a red-cross knight, he had started to deliver the Tomb of our Lord from the yoke of the infidel; on the journey he had been benighted in an enchanted forest, and had there met with a young inexperienced fellow-pilgrim, a brother of the cross. Discovering his delusion, it was his duty to put himself and his ward on the true path. How could he remember at such a moment the pleasures of the tourney, or the crown of victory? . . . And thus Antony thought only how to save the soul

of his mistress from earthly, and perhaps eternal ruin. He was sometimes afflicted by the apprehension that he would do great sin in leaving the religion of his fathers; but beside this fear appeared another and a triumphant thought, of the sanctity of duty, of the unavailability of the sacrifice. The nearer his desire was to its fulfillment, the more was his heart cleansed from the impurities of passion. Often, and even without any assignable reason, he became mournful, very mournful; then he would pray—of what, God only knew; his prayers were not expressed in words, but only in burning tears. His happiness was so obscure! . . . with its bright torrent a stream of impurity was mingled . . .

Two letters, one to his mother, the other to his instructor, were sent through Kouritzin. In the first, Antony besought his parent's blessing on the great work which he was approaching, and entreated her to come into Russia, if but to visit him. "You yourself desired, my dearest, precious mother," he wrote, "that I should never again return either into Bohemia or to Italy, and that I should find a settlement here. You yourself have often hinted that the performance of this desire would be the best consolation of your old age, and add to your prospect of tranquillity at your death. Providence has evidently willed the same thing as yourself; it has brought me here to the house of a Russian boyárin, where love has created me a new country. If you knew Anastasia (here he describes her external and mental qualities); if you knew how much she loves me, you would assuredly wish me no other partner." Nearly the same were the contents of the letter to his instructor. In it he added the weight of his doubts on the subject of his change of religion; and even here he quieted his conscience by the reflection that he had chosen a faith not torn to pieces by corruption, with which the Western Church might be reproached. Antony wrote with confidence respecting his future union. Whether this confidence was well founded we shall presently see.

As soon as Aristotle found himself recovering from his illness, his young friend hastened to disclose to him the state of his heart, his wishes, his hopes, his fears. In what employment, do you think, did Antony find the artist? He was again composing plans for his immense church. To tear himself from that would have been death to him. He was all wrapped up in his occupation. When the leech entered, Aristotle turned red and pale, as if he had been detected in some crime, and hastened to conceal the plan as well as he could. Instead of finding in the artist a zealous second to his marriage projects, Antony discovered in him an ardent opponent of the affair. His terrible trial had made Aristotle timorous even to weakness; in every thing he could see nothing but failure. He promised Antony, however, to be his advocate with the boyárin Obrazetz, as his nearest relation—as his father. But he gave him no hopes, dilating upon the invincible obstacles presented in the voevoda's hatred to the German—one of the race of his accursed foes—even though that German should adopt the Russian faith. Such a beginning promised no good; now, as always happens, obstacles excited in Antony a stronger desire to obtain the object which constituted the happiness and torment of his life.

Walking like a man in a dream, and pro-

foundly plunged in melancholy thought, Antony was proceeding home;—in his way, puffing, purple with heat and violent movement, stood the interpreter Bartholomew. He stopped exactly in his path, so as not to be avoided, bowing low, shaking his head and foot, and fanning himself with his cap: he attempted to speak, but fatigue prevented him. The young man politely begged him to let him pass.

"Nay, most thrice-worshipful sir," said Bartholomew at last with unusual warmth, as if he had suddenly got down a morsel that was sticking in his throat—"Nay, I will not let you pass till you listen to me. You may kill me, you may thrash me, only hear me out. You do not love me—you hate me, despise me, I know full well; but I cannot help loving you—that is above my powers. I am the same as I was at the first moment when I saw you . . . I feel just the same respect for you, the same ardent love, and I am ready to sacrifice for you, God knows what. Do with me what you . . . Now, what would you like to make of me? . . . Your most devoted slave? . . . 'Tis nothing . . . Your packhorse? . . . Or worse? . . . Ah! to find something worse! . . . Now, think yourself" . . .

And Bartholomew began to beat himself despairingly on the bosom with his fist, like a security actor, who is out in his part. With contempt Antony looked at him, and shrugged his shoulders.

"You will not speak; do but listen then. You do not know it; but I am your most devoted servant, your most humble of slaves, I know . . . A report is going through the city; it may reach the father . . . or the brother . . . then your death would be inevitable . . . They say you have seduced An" . . .

"Wretch! finish not the word, or I will slay thee, here, on the spot!" cried the young man, turning pale, and trembling in every limb; and, as if fearing that his menaces might be fulfilled, he rushed headlong away from the contemptible informer.

"And thus, after all," said he to himself, "the honour of a maiden—thanks to me!—is bandied from mouth to mouth: even this vile scoundrel is trumpeting it about! Assuredly her friend must have disclosed it! . . . How can I hope to save her in time from the arrows of scandal? Where is the generosity, where the use of the sacrifice? One way alone is left me—to throw myself at the Great Prince's feet, tell him all, and implore him to be my saviour and benefactor. I will do it instantly. He hinted so graciously about a bride, that I will be my own advocate."

Antony bent his steps to the palace of the Great Prince; but as he was passing Kouritzin's house, his good angel whispered him to apply to the deacon, who had been so zealous in his interests. He found him engaged in an important occupation. It was, we may add, a difficult one, because Kouritzin, the protector of the Jewish heresy in Russia, had been compelled, by order of the Great Prince, to draw up a list of the heretics, with a decree of banishment and other penalties against them, which, however, were not severe. On this occasion, Iván Vassilievitch had perfectly understood his relations and his duties as regarded his favourite servant; and that servant had no less clearly comprehended, as his master desired, his duties to him, and his relations with his brother here-

tics. As generally occurs in these cases, Kouritzin had made his list of those persons who were most insignificant, least to be relied on, and most credulous of all.

"Here," said he, explaining to the young man what he was about, "here at last Iván Vassilievitch, under the influence of the priests, hath opened his eyes! . . . A shrewd heresy this that hath been disclosed! . . . I long ago said to him—he hearkened not, believed not! . . . Oh, if thou didst but know, Master Leech, how much there is of what is attractive and sublime in this heresy! Wherefore hath it spread day after day? . . . And nevertheless it is a terrible crime, the ruin of the people! . . . It must be rooted up, cost what it may . . . And on this occasion Iván Vassilievitch is too merciful, or too obstinate. He saith—I will not do as the people like! and thus he hindereth me much. What! he hath decreed the most trifling punishments, mere child's play, nothing but a mockery! . . . One is to be exiled to a distant city, another to be mocked by the people . . . and thou seest thyself!" . . .

The report had certainly reached Antony, that Kouritzin belonged to the Jewish heresy, body and soul. He was not therefore astonished at this cunning; he had ceased to be astonished at anything. It was no time to examine into his real religious opinions, and to endeavour to turn him to the truth, and therefore the young man hastened to disclose to him his position. He praised Antony's intentions; revived and encouraged his hopes; told him that the Great Prince was already informed of the inclination of his court physician for the daughter of Obratzet. That the sovereign was in possession of this secret, Kouritzin confessed was owing to his information; but the manner in which it became known to Kouritzin, he neither could nor dared disclose—"Some day or other thou wilt know this," said the deacon, and then added—"Iván Vassilievitch is already thine advocate. Adopt the Russian faith, and I pledge myself to add my own intercession with him; but I fear, if thou attempt too rudely to turn our lord, thou wilt spoil all. My counsel, for the better success of this affair, is, to seek a sensible, dexterous *svat*, not among the great men of the land, not among princes and boyárin, but a private man, who may vanquish Obratzet's aversion to a foreigner. And this I cannot undertake—we are strangers, as thou knowest, to each other. Stay, let me see, whom can we find . . . Ay, so . . . whom better than the Tveritchápin Aphonia! . . . I think thou knowest him?"

"I know him, and will add, as far as I can judge from my connexion with him, he loveth me well, notwithstanding my being a heretic. More than once have I wandered with him in fancy over the German and Italian lands, and for this he counts himself in my debt."

"Be it so, in God's name! Implore him to be thy *svat*. Tell him that thou lovest Obratzet's daughter, having seen her only once at the window, and that after thy return from Tver. Of course, as a foundation of the business, thou must lay down a promise to take our Russian orthodox faith—it is the fountain of all blessings, (the heretic pronounced these words with a well-affected unction.) And add, too, the will of our most mighty Lord, Iván Vassilievitch. Only beware of saying that I sent thee; this is indispensable. And now, from my heart I wish thee joy of a beautiful wife and possessions."

"No, on this occasion I will accept no valuable gifts from the Great Prince, even though by so doing I expose myself to his displeasure. I will not sell myself. At least my soul shall be clear, here and in the other world, of the stain of avarice. In all the rest I will obey thee; and, to prove this, I will go straight from thy house to Aphanasii Nikitin."

"Wilt thou go alone, on foot, to the village of Tchertolino?" asked Kouritzin.

"Alone. What have I to fear? I did not take my horse, in order not to excite curiosity in the places I was visiting."

"Why not defer it till to-morrow? The way is long, there is a wood to pass surrounded by marshes . . . Thou hast enemies . . . thou hast forgotten Poppel!" . . .

"I do not think that the knight will attempt the assassin's trade. With God's blessing, I have decided. To-morrow, perhaps, it will be too late."

"Thou hast said well. Thy friends will be on their guard."

There was nothing for Antony to do but to thank the deacon.

On arriving at the cottage where the traveller dwelt, the leech heard streaming from it sounds of religious singing. The tones were so light, so free from aught earthly, they seemed to speak of peace of soul, unity, a child-like simplicity, and yet at times a masculine strength of feeling, tenderness, warmth penetrating your heart and the marrow of your bones. This was not the voice of earthly passion, this was the language of communion with God. Ehrenstein stopped at the gate and listened to the sacred song with rapture. The sounds sank lower and lower, and suddenly ceased, as if they were vanishing on earth, laden with the burden of their heavenly load. But Antony had not recovered from the feeling of tenderness which came over him, when the song was heard anew. Now it was a voice, mournful and agonizing the soul! The old man sang—"Weep not for me, oh mother, when thou see'st me in the grave!" The address to a mother, the grave, the sad lamenting song, brought sorrow in spite of himself, and a holy awe into the young man's heart. "Oh, is the voice prophetic, thou saintly old man! . . . Is thy voice prophetic?" . . . said he with tears in his eyes, removing his hand from the ring with which he was going to knock upon the door post. He was just about to retire from the gate, and he changed his mind. "I am a child, a coward!" said he to himself; "what! can the address of the Son of God to his mother so confuse thee? In the name of the Lord I will go about thy holy work, and will not fear the arrow that fleeth from the darkness."

With the last word he knocked at the gate, and at Aphanasii Nikitin's question, "Who cometh?" he replied—"In the name of the Lord." The gate was immediately opened; and, as was customary, the person who admitted him made the sign of the cross, to guard against any evil accident. Aphonia did not refuse acquaintance with foreigners; with what a multitude of nations had he communicated! In all his intercourse with them, however, he signed himself with the cross, which, he was convinced, had often saved him from harm.

His dwelling was poor, but clean. The principal ornament of the chamber consisted in an image of the Holy Virgin, on the bottom of which the traveller had displayed all the rare objects

which he had been able to bring to Russia from distant lands. Indian mats for ornaments, pearls and precious stones on the dress of the image, palm-leaves and branches of the date-tree, beautiful feathers of rare birds, forming the frame. There was his past, his present, and his future: here he had united all his wealth, earthly and heavenly.

"Is it willingly or unwillingly that thou comest to me?" asked the old man.

"Unwillingly," replied the youth, "because I have come upon a business of life and death: willingly, because I have chosen thee in this business, Aphanasii Nikitich, to be to me a father. Be my father, refuse me not!"

Such a commencement astonished the Tveritchanin. But when the young man began to relate his determinations and his request, the old man's solitary eye gleamed with a strange light; his lips parted in a smile. When he had heard the demand he expressed his perfect willingness to be Antony's advocate and *svat*, for the sake of doing a deed of Christian charity: only the success must be left in the hand of the Lord.

"Remain here in my house an hour," said Aponia, seizing his cap and staff; "I will return straightway. An evil deed thou shouldst put off from day to day, and pray; haply it will be weary of brooding in thy bosom, and will be driven out by prayer; in good hour it will vanish, like an evil spirit at the sound of the matin-bell. With a good deed 'tis different. When thou see'st a precious bird, aim at it instantly with thine arrow, bend thy bow—'tis thine, the bird of heaven. Let it fly, and it is lost in the skies."

"I am only afraid that I came inopportunist," said Antony; "I was about to knock at thy door when I heard thee singing a dirge. It filled my soul with unspeakable sorrow. How couldst thou so soon turn from praising the Lord to such a song as that?"

"How?" answered the Tveritchanin, a little confused; "I cannot well tell thee how. It was God's hour, not mine. But afflict not thyself in vain. Where the Lord is, there all is happiness and good. Let us pray to him, and rejoice our souls in him."

And the old man prostrated body and soul before the image—Antony followed him.

"Now, having prayed, with God's blessing we will leave ourselves to his judgment," said the former, and left the cottage.

We may guess in what a state of agitation the young man was left. Every step, every word of the strange mediator between him and his fate, was counted and weighed in his absence; counted as though by the throbbing of his sinking heart.

"Now," thought Antony, "the old man has reached Obrazetz's gate, now he is ascending the stairs . . . He is in the boyarin's chamber . . . he pronounces Anastasia's name, and mine . . . My lot is being weighed in the balance of fate . . . O Lord! cast down upon it a glance of mercy!"

In the mean time Aponia had swiftly directed his steps to the dwelling of Obrazetz, revolving in his head and heart speeches by which he could successfully act upon Anastasia's father. The traveller had not long before been with a holy man, Josiph of Volok, and had listened to the sacred eloquence addressed from his mellifluous lips to a certain boyarin, whose heart was

deeply touched by it. From this fountain he prepared to draw on the present occasion. At first, however, his road was rugged, and his breast at times required a moment to breathe; his trembling hand seized the ring and knocked uncertainly at the pillar of the gate. The boyarin was at home, they opened the wicket to Aponia; to Aponia it was never shut, at whatever hour of the day he might come. He ascends the stairs. In the antechamber he stopped to breathe, and to arrange his dress and beard.

Vassilii Féodorovitch was in bed in his chamber. He was grievously ill. Never before in his life had he felt any serious attack, and therefore his present malady, which had suddenly seized him, seemed a dangerous sign. A bed of sickness—perhaps of death—and the future—these were the great themes which presented themselves to the natural eloquence of our traveller-orator.

As usual, the guest entering the chamber, placed his staff near the door, made three signs of the cross before the image, and a low obeisance to the master of the house, and wished him good health; as usual, the host greeted him affectionately, and seated him in the place of honour. After a little dialogue on both sides, the Tveritchanin began as follows:—"So now the beautiful summer is gone. The birds have made their nests, have brought up their young ones, have fed them, and taught them to fly. The wind may arise from the north—it is no longer feared by the nestlings; their parents have shown them the way through the heavens to sunny waters, and to meadows of abundance. If the old birds delay too long to take out the young, what wonder if the snowy winter finds the little nestlings—the poor birds!"

The boyarin gazed fixedly at Aponia's face, and said—"Thou hast some meaning in thy words, Nikitich."

"Thou knowest well, boyarin, before the tale there is always a prologue; and I am leading my discourse to this, that our life is but a short summer. He who hath children ought to bethink him how to make them a warm nest, that they may escape from foul weather to the sunny waters."

"The birds of heaven neither sow nor reap, but they die not of hunger!" exclaimed the boyarin. "Over all of them equally doth the Lord watch; all of them equally doth he guard from bad weather; he showeth them all the path to an abundant land; but we, for our or our forefather's sins, have not all received an equal share—to one man is given a talent, to another two, to some nothing at all. We toil and take thought for our children; but" . . . (here he sighed deeply.)

"One of them flieth like a falcon from the Great Prince's fist," interrupted Aponia; "and ever, as he circleth round, mounteth higher and higher: for the other bird this fate was not destined. The swallow singeth by herself, but soon she will cut the air with her wings, though now she dares not fly far from her parents' nest. But she cannot always be warned in the cradle; the time will soon come when she must herself build her little nest, and bring up nurselings of her own."

"Again, I answer, our lot and our gifts are in the hand of God: without him a hair falleth not from our heads."

"Be not angry, my Lord Vassilii Féodorovitch, that I, a humbly-born houseless traveller,

speak to thee the truth, not as a reproach, not as reasoning with thee, but merely to arouse thy recollection. Our minds are fixed upon the treasures of the earth, or for ourselves, or for our children; but for the treasures of heaven, which are neither corrupted, nor can the worm devour them, we take no thought. And when the hour of Christ cometh, our damask kaftans, our silver cups, our iron coffers—these we shall not carry with us; we shall appear before him naked, with nothing but our sins or our good deeds."

"God knoweth, according to my power and reason, I labour to save the souls of myself and my children."

"Thou labourest? what, by seeking rich and noble bridegrooms for my lady Anastasia Vassilievna?"

The boyarin was not offended at this reproach, and answered kindly—

"Thou art right; I sought such, according to the weakness of my blood, and of humanity. And therefore, perhaps, the Lord hath punished me by the proposal of Mamon. From that time my tree putteth forth no more sweet apples; from that time Nastenka's suitors have vanished; and she herself, all mournful, hath pined away like a blade of grass on a naked rock. And have I not said prayers in the holy places; have I not set up tapers in the church; have I not lighted a lamp to burn for ever?"

"Thou hast heard the word of God—'Faith without works is dead.'"

"I have heard it, and I have done according to God's word. I have clothed the naked; I have helped those whose dwellings have been burned down; I have given meat in years of famine; I have redeemed prisoners from the infidels. And I have so done this, that my left hand hath not known what my right hand gave."

"Assuredly all this is pleasing to God. But this thou gavest of thy superfluity, of what thou hadst too much. Thou hast not shared thy last morsel; thou hast not given thy last mite. This is a far different thing than if thou, to save the soul of thy unfriend, hadst given something dearer to thee, more precious than all on earth, a piece of thy flesh and blood."

Saying this, the old man drew himself up and gazed piercingly with his glittering, solitary eye, upon his listener, like an archer, desiring to see whether he has hit the mark. If he had been compelled to repeat his words, he would have been unable to do so, it seemed as though some one else had spoken within him.

At the word "unfriend," the boyarin turned pale and trembled. "Thou dost not speak of Mamon?" he cried in the condemned voice of a man begging for mercy.

"What then? if I had spoken of him. He is thy foe!"

"Aphanasii Nikititch, my friend, thou desirest the dishonour of my hoary head, the dishonour of my son, my daughter—of all my race. Thou desirest that I die in sorrow; that from the other world I hear my children reproach me, perhaps curse me for their shame; that I hear the people and my foes laughing over my grave, and insulting it. 'This,' they will say, 'this was the tender father! this was the way he loved his children! . . . This was the way he settled his beloved and only daughter; he wedded her to the grandson of a witch who was burned in Mojaisk in the market-place! The grandson of a sorceress, the son of my deadly foe, with whom my son must fight in the lists, will

receive my daughter. . . . No, Aphanasii Nikititch, ask, demand from me something else, God knows, that for a deed of charity I will not spare my blood."

This was the very point to which Aphanasii Nikititch wished to lead him; he almost triumphed in his victory.

"Calm thyself, boyarin, it is not of Mamon I would speak. Shall his lost soul be saved by thy beloved daughter—that pure dove? She would only ruin her own. It is not herself that he seeketh for his son, but thy wealth. My bridegroom is far different, he seeketh only heavenly wealth: it is with this dowry alone that he would receive our darling, Anastasia Vassilievna."

"I cannot even guess of whom thou speakest."

Aphonia crossed himself and said—"I have come to thee as a *svat*, my Lord Vassilii Feodorovitch, but not a common, everyday one: I desire that at the great day of judgment thy soul may appear before Christ like a pure and spotless virgin. Now, thou see'st there are two bridegrooms to choose from for Anastasia Vassilievna. Our lord Ivan Vassilievitch favourerth each of them; I stand up strongly for one—both are heretics. One is a Tartar and Tsarevitch."

"Karakatcha, son of Danyar Kassimoff."

"Exactly so."

"I have already received hints about him. I am not against him, if he will take our faith."

"Certainly! he is a Tsarevitch! . . . Forsooth, a noble deed of charity . . . the honour goeth for nothing!"

This sarcasm deeply penetrated the religious soul of Obrazetz: he was embarrassed as if he had betrayed himself before his judge; but to justify himself, he answered with firmness—"Then I will not give her to the Tsarevitch; God knoweth, I will not . . . Who is the other? . . . Do not torture me, in God's name!"

"Boyarin, remember I perform the part of no common *svat*; we are preparing a crown of immortality for thee and another servant of God."

"Speak, my friend, speak!"

"The other is—Antony the leech."

"The German!" . . . cried Obrazetz, taunted and struck.

This word represented the whole race of Latins—accursed, hated—the death of his beloved son, the whole life of the boyarin, with all its prejudices and beliefs.

"Surely; I did not hide from thee that the suitor was a heretic."

"A necromancer—a servant of the Evil One!" cried the boyarin.

"Slander, Vassilii Feodorovitch! Slander is a great sin. Who can say, pledging his soul, that he hath ever heard him use a wicked word, or seen him in the works of Satan! I have often visited him, have frequently conversed with him: all his talk was of God's wonderful creation; it was full of reason, a noble and bright eloquence, like a resounding torrent. Modest as a maiden, brave as thy son, merciful to the poor. Never can I forget his goodness. One thing alone holdeth him in the claws of the Fiend, one thing alone plungeth him in the burning pitch—he is unchristened. But if he will take our faith, he will be purified from all stain—sooner than ourselves will he reach the dwelling of God. Remember, boyarin, thou hast pledged thy sacred word."

Obrazetz, instead of answering, burst into tears, for the first time since the death of his wife.

"What dost thou ask from me?" he exclaimed at last, sobbing.

"Thy blood, the dearest morsel of thy flesh, that thou mayest save the soul of God's servant, Antony, from eternal fire: have mercy on thine own soul."

"Give me three days' time—but till my son's return."

"Will Jesus Christ give thee this time to cleanse thyself from thy sins, when thou appearest before him in the other world?" (These words belonged not to Aphanasii Nikitin, but to Josiph of Volok.) "Perhaps to-morrow may be too late. Refuse Antony, and who can be sure that he will not instantly depart to his own infidel land? And then he will remain for ever in the chains of hell. And when he appeareth the other world, bound hand and foot, when they take him to hurl him into the burning pitch—'O Lord!' he will say, 'I desired to come to thee, but thy servant Vassilii did not let me. It is he who bound me hand and foot; it is he who hurled me into everlasting fire; bind him, therefore, with me, and hurl him into the fire with me.' Will thine alms save thee then, think-est thou, or thy masses? Think again, Vassilii Feodorovitch; repeat thy sacred word; the angels will rejoice when they receive into their choirs a new Christian soul, and will sing—'Glory, glory to thee, O Lord, on earth and in the heavens!'"

Obrazetz sighed deeply, as if he would breathe forth all his being; and glanced at the image of the Saviour with the love and agony of a man crucified with him; and suddenly starting from his sick-bed, strong and steady, he exclaimed with solemnity—"Let us pray to the Lord!"

After him arose the Tveritchanin. And they prayed.

"O Lord, merciful Father!" said Obrazetz kneeling, "accept from thine unworthy servant a great and painful sacrifice. I have but one daughter, my well-beloved—my treasure—and her I give to thee. Lord, Lord! remember me and my daughter when thou comest into thy kingdom."

And the boyarin embraced the traveller. Having finished the spiritual work, they returned to what belonged to earth. They struck hands, and determined to prepare Anastasia; to inform Antony, through Aphonia, of Obrazetz's consent; and to tell him that he, in order to save the maiden's modesty and honour from any stain of popular report, must depart on the next day to another house, and immediately take the boyarin's confessor, who would instruct him in true Christianity. The marriage was fixed not to take place before the judgment of God should decide Khabar's fate in the lists. Whether Antony had ever seen the boyarin's daughter was not asked; perhaps Obrazetz feared to learn what would have been displeasing to him to know.

The moment the *svat* had gone, Anastasia was summoned to her father.

"What could it be for? . . . Surely something important!" thought she, and her heart fluttered in her bosom; her feet trembled under her.

When she entered her father's bed-chamber, his grave yet affectionate face—his glance, penetrating her soul—the image, adorned with the lighted tapers as before a festival—all proved that she must prepare herself for something extraordinary.

The old man spoke in a touching voice of his sickness, of his presentiment of approaching

death. A raven, too, had perched upon the house-top and would not be driven away, and the dog had dug a hole before the window of his chamber, and Anastasia's mother had appeared to him in a dream, and called him to herself.

"Father, ah, do not die! do not depart from us!" . . . sobbed forth Anastasia, and burst into tears.

"I would not leave thee, my child, my pomegranate! but God calls me, and we may not stay. It is time to think of settling thee . . . thou art of a fit age to wed . . . wicked men will say—'She is old!'"

Among the lessons given by the nurse to her charge, how she was to hear herself, and speak, was one—with what voice she was to answer her father when he spoke to her of a husband. The motto which we have taken for the present chapter had been learned by Anastasia, and often repeated, with the necessary thoughtful study, against a similar occasion; but this was no time for it. She stood at the head of her father's bed, paralysed with grief. She could not utter a word, and wiped away with the fine sleeve of her dress the tears that streamed forth in torrents.

Her father continued—"According to the law of God, I have chosen thee a husband" . . .

"I am God's and thine," sobbed Anastasia, falling at her father's feet. "Stay awhile . . . give me not away, my father! . . . Art thou then angry with me for anything? Or am I no longer dear to thee? Or art thou weary of my virgin beauty? Make me not pine away before my time; kill me not!" . . .

"Thou canst not call back past days, nor take again a word once given. And I have pledged a solemn promise—I have made a vow unto the Lord. Nastia, redeem thy father's sins, recall not my pledged word."

Instead of answering, Anastasia sobbed, and embraced her father's knees.

"Even to a heretic . . . to a Tsarevitch? . . . We will bring him into the Christian faith; he will walk under the Great Prince's protection," said the father, desiring to prepare her for a heretic husband.

"To whom thou wilt . . . I am God's and thine . . . Only give me not to a Tartar! . . . When thou art in the grave, I will follow thee . . . I will lay hands on myself!"

"Ah! my poor child, my poor dove, what will become of thee? . . . Forgive me, my child, my beloved daughter; I have promised yet worse than to a Tartar; I have promised thee to a heretic German—to Antony the leech."

"To Antony?" . . . Anastasia tried to say, but the word was stifled in her breast.

What had she heard! . . . The dear friend of her heart, her joy, the delight of her eyes, Antony—her husband! Did her ears deceive her? Had she not spoke that loved name herself in forgetfulness? . . . She struggled to conceal her delight, but she could not—it was seen in her convulsive trembling, in every gesture, even in her tears.

"It is thy will, my father!" she said at length, passionately kissing his feet.

And she could say no more. But her father's piercing glance remarked, in his daughter's eager caresses, a feeling which he had never suspected could exist. The boyarin thanked the Lord that this feeling would be covered by the marriage crown, and would redeem the soul of a heretic from the bondage of hell. Thus were overthrown the obstacles in the palace of Obrazetz.

On the same day the boyarin sent in his son's name to Mamon, to enquire if he was recovered, and ready for the judgment of God, (this message had already been sent more than once.) Mamon replied, "I am ready, and waiting." On receiving his answer, an express was dispatched to Tver.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE WOOD.

"When the white moon alone is standing
Alone and steadfast in the sky,
To greenwood then from caves we hie,
Unto our trade of peril banding—
Behind a tree we sit and watch" . . .

POUSHKIN.

ANTONY was happy; he had saved the honour of his mistress—he was to possess her. He could hardly believe his bliss. In fulfilment of Obrazetz's desire, and still more, of that of his own heart, he determined on changing his abode on the morrow, and on going to Aristotle's house, and thence to another dwelling, as soon as he could find one. But *that* night he was to pass beneath the same roof with Anastasia. It was already twilight, when, bidding farewell to his benefactor and *svat*, he left his house. He had far to go. Kouritzin had not sent his horse, as he had promised. He proceeded rapidly. In sight of the Zaneplinnoi, at the declivity of the hill, stretching to a mossy swamp, a considerable wood lay in his path. It grew darker and darker. The moon was just peering above the earth, and threw a lazy light, at one time gazing sleepily in the traveller's face, at another glimmering through the leaves of the trees, like a bright circle of diamond, or stooping behind a tree shattered by the lightning. At last even the moon, as if wearied with her journey, was about to sink into the bosom of the earth. The Kreml alone, sprinkled with her last radiance, cut sharply against the sky the roofs of its houses and the crosses of its churches; all around stretched itself in shadow at its feet, like slaves at the foot of their padishah.

As he approached the wood, Antony was enveloped in the chilly exhalations of the swamp; the sky itself, sprinkled here and there with tufts and streaks of cloud, stood over him like a dome of marble. Wreaths of fog floated through the thickets, and the trees seemed to wave, putting on strange fantastic forms, and whispering among themselves. The birch waved its curling head, or streamed upon the breeze its long floating pennons; the black firs stretched out their hooked arms, at one time threatening from above, at another blocking up the passage; the aspen whispered, and around the traveller began to flit those strange phantoms which imagination calls up before us on such occasions. Like witches on their festival, swarms of bats flitted about, weaving their airy dances almost under the traveller's nose. To accompany them, the night-hawk, and the wood-demon the screech-crow, burst into its infernal laugh. A traveller, though no coward, might have felt eerie. But Antony was hastening home to that beloved roof beneath which dwelt his bride. He was warm, he was free from fear. In case of meeting with unfriendly people, a stiletto at his side, and a kisten armed with a sharp iron point, which Aphonia had given him—these weapons, in the hands of a powerful and courageous young man, might serve as a defence to be relied on.

It is true he felt some apprehension on account of a horseman who had followed him nearly all the way from Tchertolino, keeping parallel with his road, and continued to follow him at a few fathoms' distance.

He stopped, and the horseman stopped too; he moved on, and the same thing was done by the inevitable traveller. He called out—no answer was returned. He remembered Kouritzin's words, and considering himself, armed as he was, a match for three, he made ready to defend himself. At last he was weary of apprehensions which were not fulfilled. "Assuredly the traveller is afraid of me, and I am alarmed at him," thought Antony, as he proceeded onward without looking behind him, and listening to the clatter of the horse's hoofs as it followed him, as you listen to the buzzing of a fly, which circles round you unceasingly, but without stinging you. The sweet moments which awaited him in his future union with Anastasia, penetrated into his heart and imagination. She alone, and her perfections, occupied his mind. He was altogether buried in this reverie, when out of a wreath of fog some one cautiously called him by his name.

"'Tis I," he answered, and stopped.

Immediately after this reply, some one darted out of the bushes and rushed straight at him. "Prague—the dogs—my saviour!" said the unknown, in German, seizing Antony with unusual force by the sleeve, dragging him into the bushes and throwing him down. The falcon pounces not more rapidly from its soaring upon its prey.

"For God's sake!" he added, in a whisper, "stir not, and be silent."

The secret watchword, which was known only to Antony, was sufficient to induce him to confide in the strange unknown. This watchword reminded him of the circumstance at Prague, when he saved the Jew Zakharia from the infuriated animals that were about to tear him to pieces. The well-known pronunciation betrayed the driver who had brought Antony to Russia. Though comprehending nothing, he submitted to the will of his companion, did not move, and remained silent.

A minute passed . . . two . . . three . . . the horseman rode by them in pursuit of the young man. Antony felt his companion violently squeeze his arm. After a short delay a whistle was heard . . . it was answered by a whistle in the ravine.

"Now, quick, follow me," whispered Zakharia, or Skharia, as they called him in Russia; "a few fathoms off there waiteth thee an ambuscade of robbers; thy life hath been bought by Poppel."

Resistance would have been madness; the young man hastened after Skharia. They dashed into the thickness of the wood, further and further, till they were lost in its recesses. The guide, however, stopped from time to time in order to allow the noise to cease, caused by their hands and feet, as they forced their way among the shrubs and underwood. He desired that this rustling should be taken for the sound of the breeze rushing through the wood.

"Be sure to keep in view that little star," said Zakharia, pointing to one which was feebly twinkling in the east—"pray to God that it do not hide itself."

And onward, onward they rushed by its consoling gleam. At last they burst, fatigued, out

of the wood. Before them lay the swamp.' It seemed to them a pit in which coals were burning, so thickly arose the smoke of the fog. At this moment the breeze bore onward to their ears cries of "Escaped! . . . lost! . . . scatter, spread yourselves! . . . seize the accursed!" And the sound of horses seemed to spread in different directions, along the road to Tchertolino and along the edge of the wood. The Jew's heart seemed about to burst out of his breast: even Antony felt alarmed. 'Twas sad to leave his life at its happiest moment—horrible to die beneath the bludgeon or the knife of a robber.

"Here, somewhere hereabout, is a causeway made in the marsh with fagots," said Zakharia, in an agony of terror: "let us separate, thou to the left, I to the right . . . let us look for it . . . If you find it, cough; I will do the same . . . The causeway, or we are lost!"

They separated for the search. In a few moments Antony gave the signal agreed on. The Jew rushed up to him. The very spot, where under the dark streak of the mist a bluish vault seemed to be formed, indicated the causeway. The fugitives are upon it; in this direction, along the edge of the wood, riders were galloping . . . closer and closer came the sound of their horses . . . the panting of the wearied animals is heard . . .

"Hush! give me thy hand, or I shall fall," said the Jew, in a breathless voice, seizing Antony by the arm. "Close by there is a bridge over the stream . . . and there" . . .

He could not finish his sentence; he was almost fainting. The Hebrew had already lost presence of mind, and he was besides weak physically. He was in reality ready to fall. He had sufficient courage to undertake an exploit, but, feeble by constitution, he was unable to finish it. On the other hand, the cool courage of the young man was only developed in all its strength at the moment of greatest peril. He seized Zakharia, dragged him across the little bridge, and placed him, almost breathless, on the dry bank. Then he returned—away went a plank into the stream which flowed through the swamp—another, a third—and the communication was destroyed. The fugitives were concealed by the fog. They were saved; before them arose the suburb, the roofs of its houses peering through the mist. They heard the zauseway cracking under the feet of horses—all was suddenly still. Then arose cries and groans; entreaties for help, warnings and curses. Probably a horse had fallen into the broken bridge and carried the rider with it.

"Ha, ha! thou hast caught it!" cried the Hebrew, returning to his senses as soon as he found himself out of danger. "He that diggeth a pit for another, shall fall therein himself. But let us haste. In the suburb thou wilt find thy" . . .

Zakharia did not finish—something whistled past his ear. This was an arrow, let fly by one of their pursuers, aimed at the place where voices were heard. Frightened out of his wits, he stooped towards the ground, dragged his companion by the kaftan, and began to crawl through the fog, almost on all fours, towards the suburb. Antony could do nothing better than follow him without stopping.

"Well," said Zakharia, as soon as he found himself in a place of safety—that is, in a cottage evidently known to him, as he gave a signal knock—"well, I have made a warm ablution,

according to the law of my fathers. It has not rained, and yet I have not a dry rag about me."

The wicket was opened, and immediately locked behind them.

"Now I may sing thanksgiving and praise to the God of Abraham and Jacob," said the Hebrew, conducting his companion into a clean large chamber; "thou art saved."

"How can I ever thank thee, good Zakharia!" answered Antony, pressing the Jew's hand with feeling. This expression of gratitude took place at night; no treasures would have bribed the young man to have touched a Jew by daylight, before witnesses, in spite of all that he had done for him, and all that he was ready at any time to do for him.

"How? . . . I am still thy debtor. Thou savedst my life without any views of interest, without knowing me, from mere humanity. Yet more, thou savedst a Jew!—A Jew! what is he in the eyes of a Christian? . . . I am thy debtor, and I am only paying what I have received from thee. To-morrow I shall have left Moscow. God knoweth if ever I shall see thee again, or speak to thee! . . . Now I can at leisure give an account of that sum of good which I have received from thee, I may disclose to thee . . . Confident in the honour of thy soul, I know that not a word of mine will go further."

"O, assuredly, thou mayest confide in me!"

"I told thee, as we were travelling to Russia, that I would never forget thy benevolence; that I possessed powerful friends, who could do thee more good than Aristotle himself. Thou often laughedst at me, thou countedst me a braggart; yet I lied not. The miserable Hebrew, whom the schoolboys of Prague could with impunity bait with dogs—thy driver—is the founder of a far-extended sect in Russia. Here I have my little empire; my word is law," (the Hebrew drew himself proudly up, his eyes sparkled;) "here I avenge myself for my humiliation in Germany; I take with usury here all that my fellow-creatures, men, refuse me elsewhere. In the families of princes and boyárin, in the palace of the primate, even in the family of the Great Prince, I have my followers, my pupils, my disciples. Many women, through whom much may be done, notwithstanding their seclusion, are my warmest protectresses."

The young man listened to the Jew's disclosure with horror. He raised his eyes to heaven, as if to implore it to interfere. . . .

"Oh!" thought he, "if I remain in Russia, I will seek out these unfortunate lost sheep; I will struggle by the force of religious reasoning to bring them back to their Heavenly Shepherd. He would disregard Zakharia."

"Now, through these powerful persons," said the Hebrew, "I have influenced even the Great Prince's disposition towards thee. Through one of them the Russian ruler has been long acquainted with thy inclination for the daughter of Obrazéts."

"From whom didst thou learn the secret of my heart?"

"Thy servant, the half-christened, is my disciple. He was commissioned to follow all thy steps and movements, that in case of need he might help thee. How he watched thy communications with the boyárin's daughter, ask himself. The contempt in which he was treated in Obrazéts's house, had taught him cunning. Wherefore is our race so cunning, think ye? Thy servant knew that I wished thy welfare;

obeying my command, devoted to thee, he fulfilled the duty of a spy with singular skill and zeal. The proof is, thou hast never even suspected him."

"Never—never!"

"Forgive us; what we did was for thy good. We enveloped thee in a net, in order if thou shouldst fall into a whirlpool, we might the more easily draw thee out. I knew that Poppel was thy sworn foe. It was not in vain that thy mother pointed him out as being dangerous to thee. On the journey the foolish knight hinted, before his attendants, at his secret intentions against thee. He spoke of the commission he had from the Baron Ehrenstein to get rid of thee, whatever it might cost: a leech of his name would cast a stain upon his baronial shield. Immediately after his arrival at Moscow, he began to sharpen against thee the weapons of calumny. When this failed, he had recourse to the weapons of the assassin. Through the boyárin Mamón thy life was bought. In the house of the ambassador I had devoted persons, who informed me, or Kouritzin, of every thing. The officers sent to watch Poppel were chosen from among my disciples. At every place, at every time, my eyes and heart were watching over thee. And at all times and places I took care that no one should know, should see, that a Jew was interested in thee—never was I seen in conversation with thee. Never even in thy dwelling. I knew that my intercourse with thee would injure thee, particularly in Obratzet's house; I preserved thy name from this blot, even as I would preserve my daughter's honour. Thou canst not reproach me with the contrary."

The Jew spoke with singular feeling; his eyes were filled with tears.

"O, assuredly not!" cried the young man, deeply touched. "I never suspected that thou wert in Moscow."

"All this went on well till to-day. To-day, Kouritzin let me know that thou hadst gone to Aphanasií Nikitin, notwithstanding his entreaties to put off thy journey till to-morrow. He waited for thy return at a convenient place; but thou returnedst not. Immediately after this one of the hired band informed me of the same thing, with the addition, that if thou wert to delay thy return, thou wouldst fall into an ambuscade at the marsh, between Zanegliinnaia and Tchertolino. I calculated the hour. To assemble our devoted adherents to protect thee, there was no time: to send thee thy horse and servant would be useless. Neither horse nor servant would have been of any help in the narrow ravine, when thou wert surrounded by a dozen robbers. Kouritzin sent people to have thy horse and servant at least dispatched hither, to the house of one of my most devoted disciples. I must inform thee that I have no fixed dwelling: to-night I sleep at the house of one of my people, to-morrow at that of another."

"Unenviable is thy lot, little king of the heretics!" thought Antony.

"I at last determined to go from hence, right along the causeway of the marsh, to get through the wood to the road leading to Tchertolino, and there to wait for thee at the edge of the forest. It was known to me that one of the robbers was to follow thee. In the event of my not being able to get thee away from his watch, we two would have stopped him and fought with him. God be praised! I came in time—thou art saved. I

gave thanks to the Almighty that he had vouchsafed me this day the power of rendering thee a service. If this had happened to-morrow, God knoweth how it would have ended. To-morrow—this very day—I shall depart from hence; circumstances will oblige me to go earlier than I thought. I shall leave Russia—for ever. But tell me, what success had the intercession of Nikitin? Dost thou need the resistless will of the Great Prince?"

"That is now unnecessary. My fate is decided. Anastasia is given to me by her father; I shall remain in Russia."

"I am well pleased that my Kouritzin hath pointed out to thee a faithful *svat*, and that in this, if not I—yet one of my most zealous disciples, hath helped thee. Though I depart, I leave thee in his care . . . at least for such a time as the Baron Ehrenstein shall remain here. One thing I entreat thee, not to disclose to the deacon what thou knowest concerning him . . . what you call . . . desertion."

The young man promised this. He was, however, not much pleased to continue under the guardianship of the heretics, and he made a vow in his own mind to liberate himself as soon as possible from it. "I shall visit Prague; I shall see, if not thy mother, at least her servants . . . What dost thou command me to say?"

"Tell her, good Zakharia, that I am happy . . . as happy as man can be on earth. Tell her all that thou knowest concerning me, and my love for Anastasia, and her father's consent, and the Russian sovereign's favour. In wealth, in honour, beloved by a most beautiful and virtuous maiden, under the hand and eye of God—what can I lack more? Yes, I am happy. I should say completely happy, but one thing is yet wanting—the presence and blessing of my mother! Entreat her, to complete my bliss, to come and take a glance at me in Moscow."

"And they would call her a heretic, and she would not be happy here in a Russian family," thought the Hebrew, but did not say so, to avoid grieving Antony.

"Add, that thou hast seen me in the happiest moment of my life, when I was going for the first time to pass a night beneath the same roof with my bride. These moments belong to me, this day is mine—to-morrow is in the hand of God."

"We have now explained to each other all that is necessary for us to know," said Zakharia. "Permit me—for a farewell—permit the Hebrew . . . here no man can see us . . . I will put out the candle . . . permit me to embrace thee, to press thee to my heart for the first and last time."

The young man did not allow Zakharia to put out the candle; he embraced him in the light . . . with a feeling of love and sincere gratitude.

They bade each other farewell. When Antony left the court-yard, his servant, the half-baptized, approached him, also to bid him farewell. He was going with his instructor and protector to distant lands. The young man knew how to appreciate in this circumstance, also the delicate feelings of the Hebrew. It would be disagreeable to him to have among his servants a heretic, a deserter from the name of Christ! As he returned home, he deeply considered the noble sentiments of the Jew with peculiar gratitude; but he determined to make a proper ablution, after being touched by the hands which had crucified our Saviour,

The night was feebly contending with dawn when the young man entered his own gate. He had left his horse at Aristode's house, whither he had ridden to tell him of his happiness. Heavens! what feelings rushed along his blood, as he entered the court-yard of Obrazetz's house! when he knocked at his door! As in former times, the window in Anastasia's tower was open, (the nurse had permitted this, having heard, not without wonder, of her foster-child's betrothal to Antony the leech, whom she was henceforward forbidden to call heretic—she desired by this to gratify her future master;) as in former days, Anastasia is sitting at the window, and awaiting the return of her enchanter. She throws him a flower: the flower is warm, as though from her bosom. The lovers waited until dawn. As before, they carried on a speechless dialogue; long they discoursed to each other in passionate, eloquent glances and gestures. Morning separated them. Anastasia was about to close her window, and opened it again. Antony was about to retire to his own chamber, but again came back to gaze. Once more they said farewell. Her eyes were dim with weeping; the time during which they were to be separated, seemed to her an eternity.

And in his dreams Antony beheld . . . Oh, what floated in his dreams no tongue can tell!

"No!" said he to himself as he awoke; "no, I am too happy! . . . Oh, that I were never to awake! . . . Once saw a bee, intoxicated in the aromatic cup of a flower; the breeze carried it away with the blossom, and wafted them together to a burning pile that had been lighted by the passenger. Why may not my lot be like that? 'Twas a frantic thought, worthy an idolater!" he added, looking at the image of the Saviour: "a Christian's death should not be like this—there is a bliss above that of earth."

Aristode and his son found him still in bed, plunged alternately in sweet reveries, and religious contemplations. The friendly welcome of the one, the caresses of the other, completed his happiness. More than all did Andriousha rejoice in his bliss: he had done so much in it himself; his godmother and friend had been long betrothed by him.

"Now, thou rememberest," said he to Antony, "I prophesied that thou wouldst stand with dear and lovely Nastia under the crowns in the church."

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE PUNISHMENT OF THE HERETICS.

"And upon thys matere, my Lordis, ye Grete Prince willed mee to speke moe pore mynde, and mee thynekeith, my Lordis, yt our Lorde wyl purefyse hys soule of synne gif hee to dede ye heretikes."—*Letter of Josyf Volok to the Clergy of Ivan III.*

IVAN was not overmuch honoured by the clergy and the people, for having, in order to decorate his capital, pulled down ancient churches, and transferred a burial-ground beyond the suburbs; and they did not spare to call him a sacrilegious profaner of the grave. The weapons they employed against him, were quotations from Holy Writ and sarcasms. "And what schal wee saie of y^e pulling down of chirches, and sweeping awaie y^e graves of y^e dead?" wrote Gennadius, Archbishop Novgorod to the primate Zosimus; "and y^e making in the stance thereof gardens, and y^e performing of uncleneness! Before God a sin, and before man a shame!"

These shafts were launched against Ivan Vassilievitch, but did not wound him; he laughed them to scorn, and persevered in acting as he thought fit.

The representations, both frequent and pressing, the voice of the people, submissive indeed, but importunate, on the subject of the Jewish heresy, at length awakened his attention. He gave orders that the church should be convoked, and that the heresy should be obliterated. They desired to torture the accused—he forbade; they called for capital punishment—he did not give his permission. The sovereign "kept himself clear from the sin of punishing them with death." In accordance with his will, the church publicly cursed the heresy: to one, they decreed exile, another was to be exposed to the insults of the people. The punishment of public shame was exemplary in the reign of the sovereign, and in the fifteenth century.

We have seen that the composition of the list of heretics was confided to their protector—we also remarked of whom the list consisted. The Great Prince, to gratify some of the ecclesiastics, added from himself a number of notorious seceders from the faith, who were pointed out to him. Those who were sentenced to banishment were, without delay, sent off into distant cities, the others were taken under a guard: they were to afford a day of amusement for the people. On this occasion it would have been in no way safe for Skharia to have remained in Moscow. Ivan Vassilievitch did not so much as suspect that he was in his capital; and if the wrathful glance of the Great Prince had been once attracted towards him, he would have met with the fate of Mamon's mother. Assuredly they would not have spared the Jew. It was therefore more sensible in him to escape by times from Moscow. And this he had done, carrying with him rich offerings accumulated from credulity, from folly, and the love of every thing wonderful, every thing mysterious—that disease of the age. In his waggon he carried treasures wherewith in future time he might redeem himself and his family from the persecutions of the German citizens and princes.

The day of the spectacle was not delayed: all were busy. The scene of the sports was arranged to be the Red Square, and the neighbouring streets. On this occasion, the people were not driven to the concourse, as at the ambassador's procession: it came of its own accord to the spot. Then the business was foreign from the people's tastes, excepting that of gaping curiosity: they were conducting some German or other to their sovereign, but why and wherefore the Lord only knows! To-day it assembles for a festival of its own, for a business of its own, begun at its own suit, for an object dear to its heart, almost in harmony with its desires, and decided by its sentence: here it is at once a spectator of the execution and its executioner. Free liberty was granted to it to insult its superiors, and it hastened to profit by this spectacle, and to prepare itself sweet recollections against future hours of oppression.

The markets emptied, the shops were shut, work was at an end. The inhabitants of Moscow and the neighbourhood, old and young, from early dawn, had taken possession of their places in the square and in the principal streets. People from afar, on horseback and on foot, who had come to Moscow for business, no sooner heard of the sport, than they forgot weariness

and need, turned aside from their road, and hastened to post themselves on the centre of common curiosity. Hither, too, galloped a multitude of the Great Prince's courtiers; and among their number the Tsarevitch Karakatcha, and his comrade Andrei Aristotle. The square was crammed with gazers. Not with so much greediness fly the ravens to their prey of carrion, as there streamed hither men to behold the humiliation of their fellow-men; not so thickly wave the poppies in the ploughed land, where the husbandman has scattered an abundant seed, as crowded human heads in that square. The trees in the Great Prince's gardens, which had not yet been completely fenced in, were broken down by the shock of thousands, receiving the first impulse from some mover in the front ranks. The artisans, who bedewed the morsel of bread with painful sweat, forgot that they were in an instant annihilating what their brethren had laboured on for years, (the mob never thinks of this;) the servants of the Prince forgot that they were devastating the pleasure-grounds of him who was not only their lord, but their terrible sovereign; Christians—that they were trampling beneath their feet holy things, the churchyard, and the ashes of their forefathers, for which they were so devoted. The sticks of the constables were busy in the attempt to produce order; but had they been clubs, they could never have succeeded there.

At last rides by a crier—his arm bare to the elbow, supporting an axe. Before this harbinger the people separated, leaving a broad street. "Here, good Christian people, cometh the army of Satan!" roared the herald in a hoarse voice. "Thus our lord, the Great Prince of All Russia, punisheth heretics, such as depart from the name of Christ."

And immediately after him, like the bursting of a cluster of rockets, from one end of the square to the other arose laughter, hooting, cries of joy and of insult; this uproar spread through the whole mass of the people, and at last filled the square.

A strange, a wonderful procession! Worth a dozen of the ambassador's! From afar you cannot distinguish what is coming. You see horses, people leading them, riders, but all this so monstrous, so fantastical, so strangely bedizened with rags and straw, that at first you cannot make out the objects. . . . Ah, here it comes! . . . what can it be? It is a procession of horsemen, riding in pairs, slow, stately, and regular. In the first ranks appear miserable jades, selected apparently from that market where the steeds are valued only for their hides—admirable subjects for the anatomical theatre. They hardly can set one leg before the other: they are machines, set in motion and kept going only by the strength of the men who lead them; and if stopped, could not without great difficulty be made to move again. In the middle and rear ranks the horses are somewhat stronger and handsomer—probably with some object. They are all caparisoned with straw and tinsel trappings. They were led by dirty, tattered, but powerful ragamuffins, who towed them along with the mock dignity and skill of the most dexterous grooms, or of the bear-leaders of Smorgonia. To look at their efforts, you would suppose that the spirited steeds were about to burst away from them. The riders were mounted with their face to the tail, with their shoubas turned the wrong side out. On their heads were

helmets made of birch-bark, pointed at the top, with crests of birch-brooms, such as form the costume of the devil among our artists of Souzdal. Their triumphant brows were adorned with a thick wreath of straw, and the inscription—"The Army of Satan!" Their faces were like those in the common prints of the Last Judgment, so pale were they, so terrified, so confused. Was this to be wondered at? The condemned knew not what might be the end of the triumphal procession amidst the people, which besieged them with their shouts, and was perhaps about to pelt them with stones. They could hardly keep their seat on their horses. One struggles to preserve his equilibrium like a skilful balancer, and sits his jade as if he was mounted on a tight-rope; another waves his head like a pendulum, or incessantly ducks. Now one of the steeds makes a false step, and the rider slides downward with him; nothing but the strength of the leader holds them up. One, turning his arms backward, cunningly lays hold of the main; another delicately takes hold of the point of the tail with two or three fingers, as a skilful wigmaker takes up the toupee of his customer. There was, however, one desperate fellow among the train, who, turning his leg over his horse's back, sits as on a cushion, nodding with his helmet to the people, and making them die with laughing at his conical grimaces. This piece of audacity was rewarded by the laughter and the forbearance of the spectators.

But this forbearance was paid for by the others. At first the procession was encountered with laughter and insults. They shouted—"Dogs! . . . they crucified Christ! Jews! devils! What campaign are they going on? . . . To their prince, Satan!" Despite of these cries the procession continued to advance in order. Soon, however, the mob was not content with insult; they began to spit in the culprits' faces. Then this became too little. Blackguard boys began to seize the horses by the tail, to pull them, and to lash them with whips, to adorn them with bunches and garlands of burrs, with which they had provided themselves. Others roared—"What? do we meet the boyarins and princes of his highness, Satan, without offering them bread and salt? Can't we spare them some? . . . We have enough!" and therewith a hail-storm of stones began to shower upon the unhappy wretches. Then the beasts, though they were long suffering enough, at last were driven frantic. One four-footed Bolivar kicked desperately, broke his halter, dashed out of the ranks, and, by so doing, destroyed all the regularity of the procession. The signal was given: the confusion spread like fire among straw. Even those very animals which had gone all their lives at a quiet pace, grew restive all of a sudden, and lost all respect for their leaders. One prances, another kicks, another bites, another lies down; a few, in whose blood seethed the fire of the free steppes, ran away. Then the uproar became almost general. Some of the leaders let go the reins; the riders commend their souls to God. One man's helmet is forced over his eyes, and he, at one moment arranging that, at another, studying to guide his horse, performs feats of posture-making that he could not have executed at another time for love or money. Another's helmet flies on one side, and he bends over like the leaning tower of Pisa. A third has clutched his horse's tail, and in the most farcical manner conceivable,

he holds his bouquet to his nose; another has embraced with passionate fervour the waist of his four-footed friend. Many fall off—on whom as they lie, to contradict the proverb, fall show-ers of blows; the lowest of the rabble fails not to set his seal on them—the mark of his despotism of an hour.

But what is this that is dashing on against the tumultuous horde, swifter than the bird, fleet-er than the wind? . . . A blood stallion without a rider! He seems to fly in air, and the cloud of dust alone, which rolls beneath him, shows that he touches the earth. His nostrils burn like red-hot coals; and the rich bridle and the Cir-cassian saddle, decorated with golden damask, and his black silken coat—all glitter like fire in the sunbeams, and he is all on fire himself. No-thing can stop him; he overthrows, he tramples down, he flies over all that is in his way. The people forgets its sport; every eye is turned on the steed: those who are nearest to him wrestle and struggle to get out of his way. They cry—"Catch him, catch him, 'tis the Tsarevitch's steed! Aristotloff's steed!" . . . But no man attempts to seize him—seize a bird on the wing! . . . In his frenzy the horse dashes straight at the railing which surrounds the cannon shed, and—the top spikes are in his chest. Once breathed the noble brute, and fell dead.

Whose horse is it? Who is the rider he hath thrown off? . . . Good Lord! is it Andriousha, Aristotloff's son?

No, this was the steed of the Tsarevitch Kara-katcha, the son of the favourite of the Tsar. Fiery and mettlesome, he had, however, hither-to obeyed his powerful and dexterous lord. The Tsarevitch, almost born in the saddle, had al-ways been able to guide him to his will. Both Asiatics, the steed and rider understood each other well. What could have happened to the unfortunate animal? whether from the cries of the people, or the uproar of the procession, he had sud-denly turned frantic, had thrown his rider, and had darted off, as if possessed with an evil spirit. They said that an unknown man, pushing himself out from the first ranks of the people, had but looked at him from behind. . . Who he was, what was his appearance, nobody could exactly tell. It was certain he was a witch, an enchanter!" . . .

The Tsarevitch is lying without movement in the square . . . a statue cast in bronze, hurled down from its pedestal! The pallor of death appears even through his tawny face; his lips are white, his head is deeply gashed: that he lived could only be guessed by the streams of blood, dyeing with their purple the ground which pillows him.

The people made a circle round him, groan-ing and disputing: no one thinks of offering help. The Tartars burst through the ring, make their way up to their dying prince, cry and sob over him. Immediately after them gallops up the Tsarevitch Danyar. He leaps from his horse, throws himself on the body of his son, beating his breast and tearing his hair; and at last, feel-ing life yet in his boy's heart, commands his servants to carry him home. Antony, too, hastens up, desiring to examine the wounded man—they do not allow him to approach.

In a few minutes the news of the accident reached the Great Prince himself. He loved Danyar, and God knows what he would not have sacrificed to restore him an only and pas-sionately loved son, the last scion of his race.

Antony was summoned. He was commanded to ride instantly to the palace of the Tartar Tsarevitch, to examine the wounded youth, and to return to the Great Prince with information whether he would live, and whether he could be cured. With him were dispatched the dvoretzkoï and another boyarin. They were to convey the commands of Ivan Vassilievitch to Danyar, to permit the leech to examine his son.

The Tartar did not dare to oppose the awful will of the Great Prince; Antony was admitted to the bedside of the young Tsarevitch. The blood had ceased to flow, but a fever had exhib-ited itself, though not in a violent stage. The leech did not confine himself to a mere inspec-tion; he even outstepped the orders of the Great Prince. The indispensable bandages were pre-pared, and then the seat of injury was sought for. Ivan Vassilievitch was expecting the leech with such impatience that he came to meet him on his return. "How is he?" he enquired, in an agitated voice.

"God is merciful!" replied the leech: "the hurt is severe, fever hath shown itself, but the wounds and the disease are not mortal. If thou wilt permit me to treat the Tsarevitch, he will be cured."

"Save him, and I will refuse thee nothing; thou shalt forever walk in my favour and hon-our. But beware . . . canst thou cure him?"

"I will answer for it, my lord."

"Do so, and then ask me what thou wilt?"

Ivan Vassilievitch had hardly pronounced these words when there galloped up to the Great Prince's palace the Tsarevitch Danyar.

"He cometh not for nothing!" cried the Great Prince, turning pale, and glancing with distrust at his leech: "is he not dead already?"

"It cannot be . . . I have not lied to thee, my lord," answered Antony with firmness.

Danyar rushed up to the Great Prince, fell at his feet, and cried, in a voice of agony—"Fa-ther, Ivan, let not the leech go to my child. He hath anointed his head with some drug; Kara-katcheuka began to cry as if he had eaten hem-lock. Tartars, Russians, all say the leech will kill him. He will kill him, and I shall die with my child. The Cæsar's ambassador said he hath given many poi" . . .

"Antony!" broke in the Great Prince, sternly gazing at him.

"They are fools and slanderers, and the am-bassador too; they know not what they say, or they speak from hatred," replied Antony.

"When I went to the sick, he was lying in a fainting fit. With my bandages and medicine he came to himself: God be praised, life was awakened in him! He will cry out a little, and then he will stop. If he is not treated, and if he is given over to the hands of the Tartar or Rus-sian quacks, then I cannot answer that he will not die to-morrow or the next day."

"One of my Tartars is going to cure him," said Danyar.

"Thy Tartars lie! . . . Enough of sprawl-ing in the dust, like an old woman!" replied Ivan Vassilievitch, making a sign to the Tsare-vitch to rise; then, turning to the leech, he said—"Again I ask, wilt thou pledge thyself, if thou treatest him, to cure the Tsarevitch?"

"I have already said once, my lord; never do I lie—never do I depart from my word."

"Wilt thou lay down thy head in pledge here-of?" asked the Great Prince, throwing on the leech his fiery glance.

"Twas a tremendous, a fatal moment for Antony! . . . The words of Ivan Vassilievitch were as an axe suspended over his head. It was the great—"To be, or not to be!" of Hamlet . . . On one hand was the dangerous nature of the disorder, in which no desperate symptoms had shown themselves; his honour, insulted by the imperial ambassador in the eyes of the Great Prince of all Moscow . . . He would have to sit down with the titles of ignorant, unlearned, quack; or to defeat his opponent by his art, his knowledge, to win forever the confidence of the Russian ruler and his people, to tear from the hands of ignorance and hate a crown of honour for science, for the profit of humanity . . . Was it not for this that Antony had journeyed to an uncivilized country? This was a noble opportunity for his object! . . . On the other hand, a trifle opposing the course of disease, a single unfavourable minute sent from above, and . . . farewell Anastasia, farewell mother, farewell all that now so strongly bound him to life—all that rendered that life so bright!

But . . . honour—honour gained the mastery. Antony looked to heaven, as if to say—surely Thou wilt not desert me! and then pronounced aloud, in a voice which sounded of heartfelt confidence—"I will lay down my head as a pledge. But on condition" . . .

"Hold, thou see'st the image of our Saviour," interrupted Ivan Vassilievitch in his majestic fatal voice—"I call God to witness, that if thou killest the Tsarevitch thy head shall fly off. Dost thou hear? . . . My word never passeth by. Cure him, and the daughter of any of my boyarins is thine, and any lands thou wilt in all Russia."

"I think not of reward," said Antony, "I think but of my word. I only demand, that all my orders touching the sick be performed punctually, word for word, not departing from them even by a hair; that they may give my medicines at the times and in the manner that I order; that they admit me to the Tsarevitch at any hour of day or night. Further, I demand, that one of thy boyarins of trust, whomsoever thou mayest appoint—except Mamón—shall watch by him closely, when I am not with the patient. These are my conditions, my lord; without them my skill and my good-will are nothing; without them I will not take upon me to treat him."

"Be it as thou wilt. Dost thou hear, my friend?" said Ivan kindly. "My word is pledged for thy son; I answer for him. Get thee home, listen not to empty tales, and disquiet not thyself in vain. But if after this thou dost not according to my word, I will not let the leech treat thy son, and I will be thine unfriend beside."

"If it be so, father Ivan, I will obey thee," said Danyar.

And all, more or less reassured, separated to their different duties.

Soon Mamón heard of the Tsarévitch's accident as being fatal. One of his servants had informed him that the Tsarévitch was already dead.

"Ha, my friend! thou hast earned them—thou hast paid for thy silver cups!" . . . said Mamón to his son, with a delight which he could not hide; "hast thou heard?"

"I have heard," coldly replied the son.

"Ha! . . . she shall not be the Tsarévitch's—the Tartar's; she shall not be his bride! I said it . . . Rejoice, son!"

His son answered him with a hollow, death-like cough.

As yet the secret had not reached them, that Obrázéts had promised his daughter to Antony the leech. Although Mamón was disturbed by the news, that the old voevoda had expelled the heretic from his house, yet the tidings of the Tsarévitch's death compensated in the mean time for this discouragement.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE LISTS.

"Be of good courage now; trust to my power to aid,
To help thee I devote my soul, my wit, my blade."
PHMAYLNITZKOI.

"He dogg'd his foe, he tracked him long,
He found him—struck—but strength and speed
Nerved not his arm in hour of need."

POUSHKIN.

INSTANTLY on receiving the news that he was invited to the ordeal, Khabar galloped from Tver, knocking up a number of horses on the road. What awaited him in his father's house? His father dying, his sister betrothed to a heretic . . . He could hardly credit the latter tidings—he would not have believed it, had he not heard it, from his father himself. He sincerely loved Antony, and was rejoiced that so valiant and generous a youth, whom he was ready to consider as a brother, would possess his sister. Approving of his father's consent, he spoke to him of the noble qualities of Antony the leech, of his bravery, his attachment to the Russians, and his desire, probably a feeling of long standing, to become a Russian in religion and in manners. At the time of the campaign he had often found him in prayer; he had given him, at his urgent entreaty, together with the Russian dress, also a crucifix. By all this Antony's stain of heresy was obliterated; the Russian faith would purify him from any defilement, which *Latinism* might have left on his soul. Even here, by the bedside of a dying father, Khabar-Simskoi returned to his vow of reformation, his promise to be for the future without spot, without reproach. In his ardent but yet firm character he found the strength to perform this vow. Once pure from all the reproach of dissoluteness and wild life, the only vices of his character, he entered that oratory where his heart had been so powerfully addressed by the voice of nature and of religion—where he had performed his transformation. How sweetly did this resolution and these tidings of Antony console the dying old man! How delighted was Khabar that he could afford him this consolation, perhaps in the last hours of his life!

In preparing for the lists, Khabar desired to make his peace with all at variance with him; excepting, of course, Mamón, his dispute with whom was about to be decided by the judgment of God. Nevertheless he entreated pardon from Mamón's son, through his second, for having in the fist-combat crippled him for life. He visited also Selinova; he implored her forgiveness, and entreated her to absolve his soul from the humiliations which, willingly or unwillingly, he had inflicted upon her. How could the young widow refuse to pardon him for whom she had periled her own soul? One word, one glance, and she was once more his slave. Without thinking of again renewing their former ties, Khabar spoke to her of the sacredness of his duties towards his

earthly and his heavenly Father—towards his sister. He assured her with a solemn oath, (without an oath she would not have believed him,) that he had left Haidée for ever, and would only love that bride—that sinless maiden, whose husband he would be with the choice of his sire and the blessing of God. He also counselled Selinova to think of her reunion with virtuous people—to think of shame, of God, of a future life. With these arguments he created between himself and her a sacred barrier, through which even her desires would not dare to pass. More powerfully than all the eloquent demonstrations of this young, dark-browed preacher with burning eyes, acted Khabár's promise never more to see the most dangerous of her rivals. They separated, pleased with each other, at peace, like brother and sister who had been contending. This feeling of brother and sister they preserved towards each other till their death. That the young widow no longer remembered him with bitter or improper sentiments, she soon proved in the most convincing manner; within a few months she married a handsome young monk of the Augustine order, Iván, (surnamed among us, for some unknown reason, *Spasitel*—Saviour,) whom her burning glances had succeeded in driving mad with love—in compelling him to put off the white gown, and to adopt the Russian faith. With her hand the new-made Christian received estates from the Russian Great Prince, and both have been mentioned by the Russian Clio in the following lines:—"May 17. Ivan Spasitel, an Italian, tonsured chaplain of the Augustine rule of white monks, renounced his faith, and quitted the monkish profession, taking to wife . . . Selinova, and the Great Prince vouchsafed him a village."

You remember that Mamón had taken lessons of fencing from a courtier in the train of the German ambassador. On his recovery from the effects of his expedition in search of the *mandrake*, he had applied himself with peculiar zeal to his warlike instruction, by which he hoped to secure a victory. His progress was more than satisfactory: eye, hand, heart, guided his well-aimed blows. With this circumstance Bartholomew was acquainted. Bartholomew had experienced, in word and deed, the goodwill of the old voevoda, whose godson he was. You may judge yourselves whether mere gratitude would not have induced him to gratify his protector with a new and important piece of information! For no money in the world would he have betrayed the secret of Mamón and the imperial ambassador; but duty—a high, a holy duty—commanded him to break the seal, and with an anguish of the heart, enough to tear him in sunder, he carried his tribute to Obrazetz's bed-side. Khabár was present on this occasion.

"God knoweth," said the eternal translator or talebearer, "that it is only from the most ardent love, from the most deeply-elevated devotion, that I disclose to you my great secret. I implore you to be silent on the subject. If the imperial ambassador or Mamón were to know what I am doing, I might feel for my head on my shoulders."

He was parodying the imperial ambassador's speech to the Great Prince.

"Fear not, we will not betray thee," replied the boyarin. "But be not offended at my advice, good godson; if thou utterest it not, we shall be none the worse."

"From thy news, Bartholomew Vassilievitch," cried Khabár, "we shall not reap much good, as in the field, where we have ear so far from ear, that each other's voice they cannot hear. Be not angered."

"If it be so, as ye will . . . thou, a former leader, and thou, present leader of the tremendous forces of our most illustrious lord, blame yourselves if the victory in the lists remain to your enemy . . . What is to be done? my sacrifice pleaseth you not . . . If so, I will be si" . . .

He was about to say—I will be silent; but he did not finish his sentence. He had not strength enough to achieve the terrible exploit of holding his tongue. He had rolled up in his breast the stone of Sisyphus, and he threw it off at one effort. All was disclosed that he had to disclose.

"And what of this?" asked the father, fixing his penetrating eyes on his son, on whose face passed a slight shade of thoughtfulness.

"What? Have ye then forgot the brave man that the Lithuanian beat by the trick of his weapon? Yes, ye have forgotten wherefore, from that time, it hath been forbidden to fight with foreigners! . . . But there is yet time for thy son. In two or three days, a gifted warrior like him may learn the German art of wielding the sword. Phit, phit, phit!"—(here the interpreter drew himself up, and began to show with his arms how to advance upon an opponent)—"and pouf! right to the heart: never spare him, beat him, kill him, thrust without sparing, up to your elbow, right into that bloodthirsty heart, whence there hath streamed forth so much sorrow to this house, that reposes under the blessing of God!"

Father and son smiled in spite of themselves. "Teach me, teach me. Master Translator!" said Khabár; "perhaps I shall have occasion to fight with my neighbour's cock."

"Ye laugh! You may laugh! now I am old," exclaimed Bartholomew with a heavy sigh, like an old lion which can no longer defend himself. "Ye should have seen me in former years! Will ye believe me? . . . certes, now to look at me, a poor cripple, it is hard to believe I once fought with three such gallants as thou. One lunged at my eye, another at my heart, a third at a place more sensitive . . . you may call it . . . at the knee. But I was no fool, I remarked their thrusts, and pif, paf! . . . the fellow that aimed at my eye, had his own eye whipped out. I spitted it on the point of my sword, and sent it straight at the other's heart, so that after his death they found the eye sticking in his heart. That's the way to do it, my lord!"

"But what became of the third, did he sneak off?" asked Khabár.

"The third . . . ha, ha, ha! . . . the stroke was long talked of in Germany as a wonder of skill. But now I am a peaceful citizen; my sword—the tongue."

"Often a sword over your own head, Bartholomew," said the boyarin.

"Often a sword wielded for the good of my neighbour. Now, as I did a while ago, I turn the discourse to the saving of thy son. The Germans tell me, Mamón will certainly kill his opponent. Why should not your son learn from some skilful warrior, such as—not to go far—from Master Antony the leech?"

"Was it not thou that said that he was afraid of his own shadow?" cried Khabár.

"Then my tongue ought to have stuck to my throat! What, had I lost my reason? Certainly, I must have spoken of some other Antony, a German; but not of your future kinsman. Oh, my eyes see far! . . . The short and long of the matter is, that Master Antony fenceth to a marvel."

"I have heard so too; but the short and long is, that I shall not do for this school," said Khabar. "I trust in my own eye and hand; and more than all, in the just judgment of God. I will have no sharers in my honour or dishonour. I will bow to no man for my head."

The eyes of Obrazetz, hitherto so dim, gleamed with an unusual light. He arose in his bed, and exclaimed in a quivering voice—"Thus it hath ever been with our race! My son will not betray the heritage of his forefathers: Khabar, yet Simskoi too. What the Lord shall decide in his judgment, so be it."

"O, if so—if my counsel please you not," interrupted Bartholomew reddening, "then know, I have still a way left to serve you. . . . But this I will never disclose; do what you will, I will never disclose, not even if the Great Prince were to command me. . . . I would lay my head on the block sooner than disclose it. . . . Haply the Almighty, loving you, may use me as his instrument. . . . I met an idiot by the way, clearly a holy man, and he told me such words that . . . No, do as ye will, I will never disclose. . . . I will seal up my heart, I will lock my lips. . . . Farewell, farewell!"

And Bartholomew, fearing for his own determination, fearing to betray himself, rushed, without looking around him, out of the boyarin's palace.

You may guess that father and son could not help laughing at this secret, certainly invented by the zeal of the universal flatterer.

The okolnitchi had fixed the day, the hour, of the ordeal by combat. This was communicated to the *sponsors* on both sides. At the same time they were asked, whether the opponents would do battle in person or through paid warriors. The sponsors bound themselves to place the parties themselves in the field on the appointed day. Then they were asked with what arms and weapons the combatants would fight, on foot or on horseback. They answered on foot, and with swords.

The great day arrived. Both Mamon and Khabar had fulfilled their Christian duties, as if at the hour of death; it may be guessed with very different feelings. Obrazetz had commanded himself to be carried to the oratory, and there devoutly with tears he prayed, and awaited the decision of the ordeal.

In the same spot where now stands the Church of St. Nicholas in the Fields, on the Nikolskoi, was a low stone barrier about half the height of a man, surrounded by another fence of living trees, which embraced within its walls a four-cornered piece of ground. In it stood a wooden church, dedicated to St. George the Victorious, so old that its walls on each side had sunk, and the roofs were dotted with the mouldiness of time. Between the church and the wall was left a small square, perhaps of a dozen fathoms, on which the grass was beaten down by horses' hoofs. Sometimes the verdure, sprinkled with the traces of blood, midnight sighs and groans, the wandering of the dead, the tapers burning in the church with a bloody light, all these marks give rise to wonder, when I add, that the place

on which they might be seen was called the *field*—that is, the scene of judicial combats.

Early in the morning, when it was hardly daylight, a crowd of horsemen galloped from different points to the barrier. Some arrived two or three moments before the others. These were the okolnitchi, the deacon Kouritzin, a scribe, Mamon the elder, Khabar-Simskoi, the two sponsors, the two seconds, and a few constables. Attendants who accompanied them, took their masters' horses, and presenting the combatants with their weapons, retired to some distance from the barrier. The sponsors and seconds were commanded to bear witness, that they had brought with them no armour, club, or cudgel; which was severely forbid by the laws. All entered the barrier through a wicket except the constables, who were left there to keep watch that no one should venture to come in from without. In case of disobedience the constables' duty was to seize the offenders, and commit them to prison. It is true, behind one corner of the barrier, in some thick tufts of nettles, was heard a rustling; but it either did not awaken the suspicions of the police-officers of that day, or was left by them purposely without search. Perhaps the scales of justice had been weighed down on this occasion by gold, friendship, or interest; who can tell by what?

The wicket was made fast with a strong iron crook; those who were thus locked in proceeded to the wooden fence surrounding the church. Here the okolnitchi demanded of the combatants who were "their sponsors and seconds." When they were pointed out, Mamon and Khabar, and after them the sponsors and seconds, were commanded to kiss the cross which was fixed in the church door. From all of them was required an oath, that they with their arms "had never gone to any witches or astrologers; that they had brought no witches to the field; and that there would be none thereof in the field." Which being affirmed by kissing the cross, they were informed that if they had done this "unfairly," and trustworthy witnesses should disclose the same, they would undergo by the laws of the city, from the Lord of All Russia, a severe punishment, and from the priests, by the ecclesiastical discipline, clerical excommunication.

From the porch they advanced into the field. They measured out the circle, perhaps a fatal one for one of the combatants. The adversaries entered it. The seconds and sponsors were instructed where they were to stand, behind. Then Khabar's second informed the okolnitchi and the deacon, that the fight, contrary to law, was *uneven*, and therefore could not begin. They demanded explanation. It appeared that Mamon's shirt of mail was longer than Khabar's, and, consequently, defended him more from blows.

"Let it alone!" cried Khabar. "The heavier the armour the richer the spoil."

"'Tis for a trader to think of gain!" said Mamon; "I will take my foe's body without weight or measure."

"Well, if I am a trader, I will measure thine armour with my sword; I will pay for it with thy blood."

Mamon bowed. "As we have met, then will I give it for thy soul's rest, and even this day hang it on thy grave."

"An unnecessary pain for thee, my lord! . . . I will rather take it as a keepsake of my friend. Why delay? Even now I will put on the boyar-

rin's precious gift. Therefore my arms are superfluous."

With these words, Khabar took off his helmet and shirt of mail, and hurled them over the barrier like a pebble.

"I will not be left behind!" cried Mamon, as he doffed his own armour. "We waste words, not blood. Thou spendest time, boy; it is plain thou art sorry to leave the fair world."

"Thou railest at me for the good I do! . . . say rather, I thank ye. I give thee another hour in God's world to enjoy thyself. But there are bounds even to kindness. It is time for Mamon to seek the place where dwell other Mamons. Come on!"

And they advanced, Khabar—handsome, bright, like the bright day of heaven; Mamon—gloomy as the grave, with a face scarred with bloody seams, with his forest of hair standing erect, as if his hellish hate had armed that too to the fight, with eyes starting from their sockets; Khabar full of the justice of his cause, the bravery of his race, and hope in God; Mamon, overflowing with revenge and malice, no less brave, inspired besides with confidence in his skill—"Thou wilt conquer," said his teachers to him, Poppel's courtiers and Poppel himself. These words gave wings to his soul, armed his hand with unusual firmness, his eye with unusual certainty. In reality the fight soon became unequal. Khabar perpetually attacked, Mamon only endeavoured to defend himself and parry his adversary's blows; in doing so he was gradually exhausting him. The son of Obrazetz already perceived, though indistinctly, that the superiority was on the side of his opponent; for the first time in his life his heart was visited by uneasiness. Mamon seemed to grow taller and broader before him. Forced back almost to the fatal circle, where a half step backward—and ruin awaited him, and shame to all the race of Simskoi, Khabar sought for means to gain one step forward. Once he had been wounded in the shoulder, once he had been almost disarmed. And now the blow was raised which bent him back, as a strong arm bows a young birch-tree.

Thine hour is come, gallant youth! Far and wide, gaily, in pleasure and in joy, hast thou wandered along the fairest path of life; the beautiful love twined thy dark curls, showering warm kisses on thine eyes and lips, have cherished thee in their downy bosoms: thy comrades have bowed before thee: thy father, Russia, have gloried in thee. Thou hast lived thy life, thou hast filled thy breast with joy. Thine hour is come for thee to lay thy gallant head in the cool damp earth. Why didst thou not lay it down in the stricken field, in honourable fight against the Tartars and the Mordrui, the foes of Mother Moscow, the golden pinnacle of Russia? Then thou hadst died, wept by thy companions in arms, and thou wouldst have lived in the memory of thy people. But now thou must die a shameful death . . . And they will refuse thee Christian burial.

His second turned pale; the deacon, the okolnitchi, were longing in their souls to ward off the blow . . . this might be seen in their eyes, in the movement of their heads . . . they strain forward, as though the sword were raised above them.

At this very instant some one from behind the barrier cried out—"The eagles are coming! the eagles!" Mamon shuddered, turned pale, look-

ed up to the sky, and retired in spite of himself. Did he expect to see his winged foes? Were they flying to take part in the fight against him? The blow was lost. It was plain God himself was on Khabar's side. The son of Obrazetz hastened to profit by his opponent's unexpected panic, and to take up a favourable position. "Recover thyself!" he cried to him. But Mamon had lost his presence of mind, and acted like a child. Soon the sword is beaten from his hand, his wrist and face are deeply gashed. His antagonist, feeling that he owed his victory to accident, gives him his life. Disfigured for ever, almost blinded, Mamon curses every thing and all men; himself, the witnesses, and Providence—he blasphemes. "Do I wish to live?" he screams to Khabar—"I do; I will live for the ruin of thee and thy race. Thou hast made a mistake, my friend! . . . It had been well for thee if thou hadst killed me!"

The constables search, or pretend to search, for the person who cried out about the eagles, but do not succeed in finding him. (This failure is to be attributed to the power, perhaps also to the bribes, of Kouritzin.) The judges and witnesses of the combat, the deacon himself, gaze in terror in each other's faces, as if asking whence came the strange voice—the strange cry about the eagles? Why did the mention of eagles terrify the combatant? This is not natural; was it magic, or a voice from God?

And who do you think it was who had cried out? Bartholomew. The interpreter had kept his word—he had performed a service, and, screened by the bushes which surrounded the circle, he had escaped safe and sound from his benevolent ambushade. If he had not, he would have soon found himself in prison. Oh, to do a service, he was ready even for the fetters!

The ordeal was decided. The second of the defeated combatant called his attendants. Mamon, all streaming with blood, was borne hence; his sponsor paid the okolnitchi and the deacon a fee, the scribe drew up an account of the combat, the deacon signed it.

In the mean time, Khabar, beneath the porch, was praying to St. George the Victorious, who had lifted up his sword in his behalf.

At length solitude reigned in the lists. The birds of prey alone flew up, to look whether there was no carrion for them.

Khabar found his father in the oratory. There Obrazetz had been kneeling in prayer, and had fallen into a death-like lethargy. On one side he was supported by Anastasia, who was bedewing him with her tears, on the other by the old nurse. Suddenly he began to quiver.

"He comes!" he cried, turning to the image of the Saviour, his eyes glimmering with unwonted light.

Some one stealthily darted into the adjoining chamber. Anastasia had not heard it, but the father had. . . . The door opened. Khabar stood before them.

"The field is fought?" asked the dying man.

"It is. Not I, but the Lord hath conquered," replied his son, and related how the combatants had borne themselves; not concealing his ill success at the beginning of the battle, nor the accident to which he owed his victory.

"Very merciful art thou to me, O Lord! . . . thou hast saved my race from shame . . . I may die in honour . . . Ivan . . . Anastasia . . . Ant . . . receive my blessing! . . ."

He could not utter more, but made a sign that

they should bear him to the image; and he passed away in the arms of his children. The face of the dead was lighted with the smile of the just; assuredly angels had welcomed to themselves an earthly guest returning home again.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE DISPUTE FOR THE BRIDE.

And gloomily the witch repeated:
 "Soon shall he fall, soon shall he fall!"
 Then thrice between her lips she muttered'd,
 Thrice stamp'd her foot upon the ground,
 And, a wing'd snake, away she flutter'd.
 ROUSLAN and LIUDMILA.

THE Tsarévitch Karakátcha was sitting up in bed. His head was still bandaged; on his face remained traces of his disease; but it was evident that the energies of powerful vigorous life were obliterating them. A malicious smile was on his lips—from time to time he burst into a laugh.

What it was the cause of his merriment? The jests with which Roussálka was amusing him. The dvorétzkoi had so well succeeded in making himself agreeable to the youth, that he had become his inseparable companion. Though this nurse of the masculine gender had not at first much pleased Antony, who well knew his crafty disposition, yet in the end he had himself begged him to make frequent visits to the patient, seeing how successfully the old man had assisted the cure with his jokes; and the recovery had been rendered difficult by the fits of rage to which the spoiled Tartar had given way. What was there that Roussálka would have refused to do, to afford pleasure to the young Tsarévitch! At one time he gratified him with the music of a cat, suspended in the air at the tail of a kite; at another he delighted his benevolent heart by bringing him an offering of birds, which the invalid cut to pieces with his sabre, or blinded. And then Roussálka would represent, with gestures enough to make one die of laughing, the Germans, with their ambassador, and the manner of their appearance at the court of the Great Prince; or the Russians, when they brought tribute to the Tartar Khans, and himself and his own father in the form of a he-goat. Since the time of his accident, the Tsarévitch could not hear without a shudder the clatter of a horse's foot, or even his neigh. For a Tartar to be afraid of a steed, was the same thing as for a sailor to dread the water. This gave great anxiety to Danyar. To remedy this misfortune, to cure his son of hippophobia, the dvorétzkoi took on himself. Success confirmed the promises and proved the labours of Roussálka. He frequently played at Henry the Fourth's game—that is, he transformed himself into a nag, went on all fours, neighing and prancing. The difference was only this—that the good king made himself a child for his own little children, while the dvorétzkoi played the quadruped to amuse a Tartar Tsarévitch of eighteen. The game, however, finished by Karakátcheuka mounting on his back, and driving him along with good cuts of the whip. And for this the tender, narrow-eyed papa knew not how to thank the clever, obliging courtier.

The news was already generally known, that Obrazétz had given his dying benediction on his daughter's union with Antony the leech. This unexpected circumstance had overwhelmed Mamun with unusual despair—already tortured in body and soul. He sought anew an opportunity of revenging himself on Obrazétz, even in the grave, through his children. "Thou hast altogether forgot me," he said to his friend the dvorétzki; "where is thy word, where thine oath? Is it thus thou rewardest me for my services? Did I not save thy head in the matter of the Prince Loukómskii? . . . Crush me this leech in any way thou wilt . . . I have promised it to the imperial ambassador . . . I have sworn that the daughter of Obrazétz shall never be wed to living man . . . If thou wilt not pleasure me in this, then will I never let thee rest even in the other world."

Delicacy, if not conscience, was aroused in the dvorétzkoi by this reproach: it reminded him, also, of something which his friend's discretion had left unsaid—the rich gifts which Mamón had showered upon him with a prodigal hand from his treasury. Whether these were followed by new gifts, or whether gratitude was his only inducement, we know not: we only know, that Roussálka promised his sick friend to dissolve the new connexion.

In order to attain his object, he insinuated himself into the confidence of Karakátcha: he began by extolling Anastasia's beauty, and succeeded in awaking in the young Asiatic, with fiery unbridled passions, a desire to possess her whatever it might cost. The Tsarévitch had never in his life been denied any thing; had he asked for bird's milk, even that would have been sought for to please him: so spoiled was he by his father. But for a heretic to obtain, without circuitous proceedings, a Russian maiden, the daughter of a boyárin, was not even to be thought of. In the path between them there stood an important condition, before which it would be necessary to bow—namely, the change of religion: there were also obstacles—Obrazétz's blessing on his daughter's betrothal to Antony the leech, and the consent of the Great Prince. The condition might instantly be obviated, by performing it: to annihilate the obstacle Roussálka was now feeling his way.

"She was betrothed to thee by the Great Prince himself," said the artful dvorétzkoi, among other things; "for this our lord, Ivan Vassilievitch, pledged his word to thy father as they were marching on the campaign against Tver. 'Twill be a pity if she belong to another! Shame, if the Tsarévitch's bride belong to an Almayne leech! The people will say—the Tsarévitch was drinking mead, but it ran over his lips, and went not down his throat: the precious goblet was plucked from his hand by a foreign stranger fellow!"

"I will give her up to no man!" cried Karakátcha, striking his fist on the bed. "Ivan Vassilievitch promised her to me; so she is mine. Did he promise her in jest? My father gave him his warriors, and he hath not taken them back."

And Karakátcheuka began to roll about, to cry like a spoiled child, to whom his nurse will not give some favourite toy.

"Console thy darling boy," said the dvoretz-koi to Danyár alone; "promise him Obrazétz's daughter, though falsely! She flits before the poor child even in his dreams. When he is well, then thou canst manage as thou thinkest fit. But, now he is weak, yield to his humour."

The fond father promised to tranquillize his dear son by confirming the dvoretzkoï's words, that Anastasia was really promised to him by the Great Prince, and that no power on earth could deprive him of his bride. The leech, he added, they could drive from his claim by threats or bribes. He was no very terrible enemy! He would consider it a happiness to give way to the Tsarévitch.

In this discussion Antony found his patient and his nurse. On examining the former, he, according to all the symptoms, might congratulate himself on his speedy recovery; he only found a slight degree of fever. And therefore he begged them to dispatch to him a faithful Tartar, by whom he promised to send the medicine.

"Thou givest me bitter drugs," said Karakatcha ill-temperedly; "but my bride, the fairest flower of my garden, thou jugglest away from under my nose."

"What bride?" asked Antony embarrassed, as if he had not understood to whom he alluded.

"What bride? Obrazétz's daughter! She is betrothed to me. She was promised to me by Iván Vassilievitch himself. Thou shalt give her up whether thou wilt or no."

Antony laughed, as he would have laughed at the request of a child who had begged for the moon from the sky.

"Father, give him a handful of silver—let him yield by fair means."

Danyár was about to depart to perform his son's will.

This had now gone beyond a joke. The idea of selling his bride irritated Antony. He detained the old man, and said to him with displeasure—"Tis a vain trouble, Tsarévitch. Heap up piles of thy silver till it is equal to the palace of the Great Prince, and then I will not exchange my bride for it."

"Karakatcheuka is in love with her; yield, leech!"

"I am myself in love with her," cried Antony ironically; "I would not give her up for an empire."

"We will take her by force!" cried Danyár, firing up.

"We will take her by force!" repeated Karakatcha, rising from the bed.

"To do that, no force on earth is sufficient. Remember, you are not at Kasimoff."

"My Kasimoff is there, where I am with my hand," said Danyár: "even in Moscow I am still Tsarevitch. If that is not enough, I will obtain a paper giving me the maiden, from my good friend Iván Vassilievitch."

"The Great Prince hath promised me any boyarin's daughter for the cure of thy son. Thy son is well, and I choose the daughter of Obrazetz."

"My son would have been well without thee. We called thee in only to pleasure Iván Vassilievitch."

"Why chaffer with him so long, father!" cried Karakatcha. "I am well; I want him no

more. Call our Tartars, and let them flog him to the gate with their whips."

"The man that toucheth me shall not remain alive," said Antony sternly, laying his hand on his stiletto, his inseparable companion. "My Lord Dvoretzkoï, wert thou not, thou, a confidential servant of the Great Prince, placed here that they might obey my orders, and dost thou allow me to be insulted by senseless Tartars?"

Seeing that the flame he had kindled was likely to burst forth into an inextinguishable conflagration, Roussalka began to cool it. Let it burst forth without him, so much the better, so long as he could keep out of it himself. He went up, now to the father, now to the son, implored them to abate their wrath; he assured them that the affair should be settled without violence; that he, their faithful servant, would lose his head if harm was offered to the court physician; that he rather counselled them to entreat the leech to yield up his bride in the Tsarevitch's favour. And he turned to Antony with a prayer not to irritate the Tartars, and to promise to give way just for the moment. "The accursed Tartar whelp," he said, "would soon be well, and all would be right again!"

But Karakatcha would not listen to him. He became furious, he stamped, he tore his hair, by which the bandages were displaced, and the blood showed itself; convulsions began to shake him. The father was terrified.

"The leech is a sorcerer; he hath brought back my son's disease, in order to avenge himself about the maiden," thought Danyár, and threw himself at Antony's feet, imploring him to save Karakatcheuka, and swearing that he would never again attempt to obtain his bride.

Thus do savages rush, in their passions, from one extreme to the other!

Was it possible for Antony to be angry with such savages; the rather as in the recovery of the Tsarevitch was involved all that was dearest to him in the world—Anastasia, his life, his honour! He hastened to afford assistance to Karakatcha, and soon succeeded in relieving him.

The strong constitution of the Tartar, assisted by medicine, again set him on his legs; so that in two days' time he was, as before, laughing heartily at the jests of the dvoretzkoï, and giving himself up to the innocent amusements of his good heart. The news of the successful cure reached even the Great Prince.

With the leech a peace was concluded, which Danyár did not infringe by the slightest attempt. The Almayne sorcerer had conjured back the sickness, and had as soon healed it again: how was it possible not to fear and respect him? But the darling son, probably at the dvoretzkoï's instigation, again took it into his head to make his demands on Anastasia.

"Cease this folly," said Antony in a threatening voice, "or it will be worse with thee than before. I will convulse thee in a moment!"

The Tsarevitch was terrified by this menace, and remained dumb.

On the same day Antony had sent by a faithful servant, a Tartar, a new medicine, which he thought would conclude the cure. It was time to receive the prize promised by the Great Prince; the reward for which he had suffered so much.

He already touched the goal of all his desires and prayers; his foes and those of the family of Obrazetz were vanquished; his honour and his head, redeemed from the terrible pledge to which the word of Ivan had bound them, the hand of Anastasia would soon rivet his ties to fate and to mankind. No man, no obstacle, could contest his bliss; even his conscience was silent, to give him, as it would seem, full freedom to revel in his hopes. The kind good old man who was departed, seemed about to draw away from him Anastasia's heart and thoughts. They had hardly been able to tear her from her father's grave; but in the space of some time a living friend, her enchanter, her plighted husband, again took up all her thoughts and feelings. She could not long restrain herself from seeing him. The indulgent nurse arranged for them, beneath the veil of an autumnal night, at the wicket of the court, a sweet, a maddening interview. With Anastasia's brother Antony's friendship grew stronger and stronger. Thus near was the pinnacle of his happiness.—An autumnal twilight was thickening over the city. In the izba of the Tsarevitch Danyar all was buried in profound sleep. Karakatcha slumbered, his father did so too; in the neighbouring chamber the Tartars were following the example of their lords: all were hoarsely snoring to such a pitch, that the listener would have needed strong ears not to be driven out of the house. Yet in the chamber of Karakatcha there *was* a listener, to whom this music was far sweeter than all the harmonies of earth. He lay upon a bench, and pretended to be asleep; I say, pretended, because he, in the midst of the most furious accompaniment, arose from the bench, and cautiously, hardly breathing, began to steal across the room to a shelf, over the very ear of Danyar. The old Tsarevitch, like the serpent of the mountain in the fairy tale, kept there the water of life for his son. Profiting by his slumber, the man who had glided up to the shelf, with one hand took something that stood on it, and with the other deposited something in the place of the object he had stolen. Having done this, he returned to his bench, stretched himself again upon it, and again began to snore as though nothing had happened.

Danyar awoke first, and ordered an attendant to give him a candle. When this was done, he with difficulty managed to awake Roussalka, who was sleeping on the bench. Then the young Tsarevitch awoke also.

"It is time for Karakatcheuka's physic," said Danyar, taking the phial from the shelf.

From the moment he observed that the medicine evidently relieved his son from the last attack, he had with the greatest punctuality followed the directions of Antony. On the present day, he had received fresh orders to begin the phial that had been sent as soon as the fires were lighted in the houses; and therefore the old Tsarevitch hastened not to let pass the time fixed for the dose.

"Eh!" exclaimed Roussalka, "I would long ago have thrown all the phials out of the window, and now more than ever. Methought the leech had a kind of look that"

"Scare him not, dvorétzkoï," cried Danyar; "as it is, thou makest my child angry. Drink

it up, Karakatcheuka; hearken not to him . . . the leech said it would be sweet . . . for the last time" . . .

And Karakatcha, himself afraid of disobeying the all-powerful physician, drank from a silver cup a liquid that had been poured into it. The draught seemed exceedingly grateful, and he asked for more. "Give me more . . . The leech said, that if I drank it all up, so much the better!"

There was one man in the chamber who changed countenance—namely, Roussalka. No one remarked his confusion. He soon recovered himself, and applied himself to amuse the young Tsarevitch with buffoonery, which he again commenced. All were merry; Karakatcha more than the rest. But a quarter of an hour did not pass, before he began to complain of a pain in his stomach and breast . . . His lips turned blue, his face became at one moment red, at another deadly pale. At first he groaned, then his groans were succeeded by shrieks . . . They sent for the leech. The messenger returned with the answer that he was not at home. Fresh couriers were dispatched in various directions to seek for him. The dvorétzkoï offered himself for this service—only then, when he saw that the Tsarevitch was dying.

They discovered the leech at last . . . Poor, unhappy Antony! He found the Tsarevitch a corpse.

Danyar was lying insensible on his son's body; he saw not the leech, or he would have slain him. The Tartars were about to rush at Antony; but he was saved by the constables, already sent with orders from the Great Prince to take him in custody and put him in chains. Antony did not resist them; he knew that his fate was decided; he understood Ivan Vassilievitch, and he remembered that the word of the terrible ruler would not pass by in vain. Though innocent, he must bow his head beneath the axe of the executioner.

The following is the manner how, and the person from whom, Ivan Vassilievitch received the first tidings of the Tsarevitch's death:

Roussalka, instead of going to seek the leech, as he pretended, galloped straight to the palace of the Great prince.

"My Lord Great Prince," said he, entering Ivan Vassilievitch's sleeping-chamber, and trembling all over; "I bring thee evil tidings."

"What—a fire? My horse!" cried the Great Prince, who on such occasions always repaired to the spot himself to extinguish the conflagration, even though it took place at midnight.

"No, my lord, the Tsarevitch Karakatcha . . . is dead."

The Great Prince turned pale and crossed himself.

"Dead! . . . I cannot be! Karakatcha was well to-day . . . the leech said. Thou liest, or thou art mad!"

"It is true, my lord. Order enquiry to be made. The dear boy was quite well. He eat to-day well, slept sound, played with me . . . But . . . he had a quarrel with Antony the leech about his bride, Obrazetz's daughter . . . and Antony sent him poison . . . killed him for a jest. I saw with my own eyes how the

poor Tsarévitch was tortured in departing. My heart was torn with pity."

"Killed! . . . for a jest?" . . . cried Ivan Vassilievitch, frantic with rage. "My word is pledged . . . Thou heard'st it! . . . Hath he then two heads! . . . In fetters with him, to the prison! . . . He shall die a hungry death!" . . .

He could not utter a word more; his eyes glazed, foam was on his lips. Then calming himself a little, he shook his head and burst into tears. "I promised to Danyar to cure his son!" he continued. "He had but one—one child; but one comfort for his old age! I have paid him well for his faithful service! . . . It was not for nothing that the father opposed his being treated! . . . No, I had to persuade him! . . . Killed him for a jest? . . . Rasping to death is too little! . . . Burning on a slow fire too little! . . . I will give him up to the Tartars, to be tormented, to be sported with . . . let them do what they will with him! . . . And in the other world he shall remember my word."

Then he made him repeat how Antony had quarrelled about the daughter of Obrazétz; when and by whom the poison was sent; whether it soon began to torment the Tsarévitch after he had taken it. Roussalka repeated the whole, artfully interweaving in his tale Antony's former dispute with the Tsarévitch; how he, the dvorétzkoï, had parted them; how the leech had threatened that day to repay Karakatcha more bitterly than before; how he had ordered the father to give him the poison to drink, even all at one dose—saying, "it will be sweet . . . for the last time," and that his face had darkened as he said so. He had not brought the poison himself, as on former occasions, but had sent it by a Tartar, in order that he might have the excuse that wicked people had changed it. "I advised the father," continued Roussalka, "I entreated him not to give the medicine; but no, he gave it, as though he were out of his senses, as if he had eaten of the insane root. . . . Plainly, he was compelled by the Evil One."

When he had heard all this malicious tale, the Great Prince repeated the strictest orders to keep Antony in the prison, in irons, till he should deliver him up to the Tartars to torture and make sport with him. He was about to order Anastasia to be shut up in a monastery, but he changed his intention. Probably he called to mind the services of her father and brother.—"The maiden is innocent," he said, and commanded them to change the order.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE PRISON.

"I was all full of hope and joy: I dream'd
That no sad parting day, no future hour of sadness,
Would ever come upon me. Tears, and hate, and madness,
Treason and calumny—a black and vengeful flood—
Stream'd sudden on my head? where was I? where? I stood
Like traveller, lightning-biased in the desert,
And all was dark around me."—POUSHKIN.

WE are already acquainted with the prison. In the very same division of the Black Izba in which had been imprisoned first *Malphas*, the interpreter of the Prince Loukóinskii, and then

the *posádnitzá* Marpha, Antony was confined. Yesterday he was free, with new pledges of love and friendship, almost at the summit of happiness; and to-day in chains, deprived of all hope, he was awaiting death as his only relief. He had entreated them to examine into the affair of the Tsarévitch's illness—it was refused; his crime, they cried, was as clear as day.

"O God, thou alone art left me!" he said bedewing his fetters with his tears; "I rebel not against thy will. Perhaps thou wiltest to punish me for leaving my faith, which I did not account a transgression; perhaps thou chastisest me in love for me . . . Who can tell what bitterness might have poisoned my future life? Now I drink my cup alone, and then I might have had to share it with a wife, with children . . . I should have doubly suffered, beholding their sufferings. I know that Anastasia loveth me; but at her age impressions are so transient . . . She may live long . . . she will lament and weep awhile for the heretic, and then she will cease . . . What cannot time perform? . . . Nevertheless it is very bitter to leave her all that she gave, and all that she promised me. . . . If she love me truly, with a love not of this world, then we shall soon meet again; if God hath joined our souls, man shall not sunder us. But to one dying to this world, what are these desires! . . . She is so young, so beautiful, so made for happiness! . . . O Lord! vouchsafe that she may be blessed by the joys, the triumphs of love, the happiness of wife, of mother—all the blessings of existence; vouchsafe to her all that thou takest from me in the fairest years of life; grant me but in one of thy mansions to rejoice in her happiness! . . . O Lord, Father of Creation! what wilt thou do with my mother! What will become of her when she learns my imprisonment, my ignominious death? . . . One thing I beseech thee for her sake; so do, that till the end of her life she may not hear of the terrible change in my destiny—that she may think me still alive and happy! Deny me not, my God—thou, who thyself callest me to this world, and art now about to summon me into another—that even there I may be consoled for my earthly sorrows by the peace of my mother."

In such meditations Antony passed days and nights, nor did he forget his old instructor in his prayers; but, knowing the firmness of his soul, this knowledge softened his remembrance of him. Sometimes, forgetting himself, he still thought of his future life on earth; of the bliss of loving, of the heavenly days promised by his union with Anastasia: sometimes he fancied, as in a dream, that all around him was a vision, a phantasm. But he was soon awakened from this enchantment by the cold weight and clinking of his chains, by the iron-barred window, in which the light hardly penetrated through the panes of bladder into the stench and filth of his cage. On the wall were rudely scratched the names of his predecessors there—Matheas, Marpha, the *posádnitzá* of Novgorod the Great. What had been the fate of these? . . . One was burned alive in an iron cage, the other had pined away in his dungeon. Could he have thought, when he arrived in Moscow a few months back, and beheld the flames devouring the unhappy Lithuanians, that the same fate was

to fall upon himself! Could he have imagined, when he visited the black izba in the courtly train of Ivan, honoured with his particular notice and distinguished favour—as it were, hand in hand with him—that he would be shut up in the very same cell where he had been so shocked by the sufferings of the *posadnitsa* of Nówgorod? Oh, if vain illusions had not obscured his reason, he might have seen what he had to expect in a country where ignorance and prejudice had excluded him from the community of Christians, and numbered him among the children of Satan! Had he not seen the Prince Khólmiskoi himself, the ornament and glory of his country, save himself from the block by hiding his head beneath the shield of accident, in his chamber—the chamber of a foreigner? Had he not been warned by the frightful fate of the Prince of Ouglitch, the Great Prince's own brother, who had been invited by him to the friendly board, and borne along to a dungeon, where at that very moment he was withering away! Next to him, behind the partition-wall of his cell, were heard sighs and groanings: were they not the groans of that very Prince of Ouglitch? How soon had he shared the lot of that sufferer! Poor Antony, he had no ears to hear, no eyes to see; he had lost his powers of reason! Passion had blinded him to all. But, nevertheless, if he had again to begin his life in Russia, knowing that it must finish as it would finish now, he would again have chosen to meet with Anastasia, to repeat the torments and the bliss of the last few months, and then to die—even a death of ignominy. He had already enjoyed blessings such as a mortal can but once enjoy on earth; he had already received from her a precious tribute, such as it is the lot of few on earth to share; he had received *his part* on earth—what could he hope more! The Lord plainly loved him, for he would call him to himself at the brightest moment of existence. O, that *there* he might find a continuation of past moments of bliss!

To the hopes and consolations which fluttered over the whirlpool of his thoughts and feelings, was superadded one deep source of joy: Fate had preserved him, even against his will, from renouncing his religion he would die in the faith of his fathers. But even this alleviation was of short continuance. He was overwhelmed by the bitter thought, that Anastasia, after his death, would estrange her heart from the heretic, would not visit the grave of a Latiner; and perhaps a necromancer, the servant of the Evil One, would again in her thoughts replace Antony, her plighted husband. They would cast out his corpse into the forest or the swamp, a prey for the ravens. This thought so completely possessed him, that it became his only desire to have a Russian priest, who might guide him on the path to another world, in the name and with the authority of the Saviour. What sufferings had not his soul encountered in the first days of his imprisonment! I will not speak of his physical privations. Every day they diminished his food: at last they began to give him dry bread by morsels, or water by jugs. His table was strictly watched by the *dvoretzkoi* of the Great Prince. Privations of this kind he bore with firmness; but what more than all tormented him was his

uncertainty about his friends, and about Anastasia. O, for the consolation of knowing that they were thinking of him! O, for one word of tidings from them! To prisoners under capital sentence it was forbidden to admit any person whatever, except those who were to take charge of them during their confinement. But the will of man, in union with intellect or love, is stronger than bars or fetters, more sharp-sighted than any Argus.

On the Feast of the Protection of the Virgin, through the grating of his cell, from the passage of the prison, the withered arm of a woman threw him a *Kalatch*.* The bread had been broken. Antony took it up, and what did he see? In this present was concealed a treasure—Anastasia's crucifix! He could not but recognise it. The cross was covered with his burning kisses, bedewed with his tears, and hastily concealed in his bosom, deep, deep, at his heart. God forbid, that his guards should see his sacred companion, and take it from him! Rather death itself. Now Antony is no longer alone; with him was his Saviour dying on the cross; with him she, his bride, his wife in this world and the next. She was again plighted to him for ever

To add to his happiness, on the following night he was visited by Keuritzin, who had found access to the prison by a golden—an all-powerful key, under the protection of officers devoted to him. He remembered well, and was eager to perform the commands of his instructor Shkaria, and he brought what was calculated to fortify both the body and soul of the prisoner. Food, more plentiful and palatable, materials for writing, in case of his being able to correspond with his friends at a favourable opportunity, news of those concerning whom the unfortunate prisoner was most anxious to hear, and hopes of mollifying the Great Prince—this is what the great Kouritzin brought him. Antony placed but little confidence in the hopes; but the sympathy and love of his friends repaid him for all his past sufferings—"In prison, in misfortune, it is now that I feel the true value of friendship, of love," said he to the deacon: "can I murmur, after all that the Lord hath vouchsafed to me, can I complain of my fate! There, next to me, is a crowned Prince, but—dost thou hear his groans? he is wasting away, deserted by all! With the treasure which thou hast brought me, I can die without a murmur; in the last moment of my life I must bless him who guides me on my path, and kiss the hand that leads me to it." How fervently did Antony thank his nocturnal visitor for having furnished him with materials for writing! He implored him as one last favour, to visit him once more, and receive from him some letters for his mother.

"The good Zakharia will enable them to reach her, if thou canst find an opportunity of sending them to him," said the prisoner. "And for this, in the other world, at the throne of God, I will pray for the salvation of his soul. If thou see'st Zakharia, tell him that I, before my death, thanked him with my tears; and that I will not forget him on high." And he devoted all the

* *Kalatch*, a species of very fine white bread or roll, peculiar to Moscow. They are generally eaten hot, and are delicious; *experto crede*.—T. B. S.

hours, during which he could conceal himself from the watchful eyes of guards, to the duty of writing a number of letters to his mother. These letters bore different dates, and might serve for a year or two. In them Antony represented his happy life with a lovely and adored wife, the favour of the sovereign, the hope of one day visiting Bohemia with the Russian Embassy—all, all that he could invent for the consolation of his mother. His soul was agonized; he swallowed his tears, that they might not fall upon the paper on which he was tracing lines where all were false except the assurances of filial love.

With what rapture did not Poppel and Mamón triumph in their victory! The first was overjoyed at having rid himself of a man who was formidable to his uncle, and whom he himself hated for his family resemblance, for his physiognomy, for his external and mental merits, and still more from some obscure and unintelligible feeling of aversion. The secret voice of his heart had, it is certain, always armed him against Antony Ehrenstein But Mamón! Severely wounded, disfigured for life, he revived again as if he had been sprinkled with the Water of Life. He called to him his domestic spectre, who presented himself before him, as if from the grave, only to hear the joyful news of some misfortune.

"Hast thou heard?" said he to his son; "thy fair bridegroom—thou knowest . . . the Almayne Antony, has been cast into the black izba; his head is not firm on his shoulders. Ha! said I not so? The daughter of Obrazétz shall never wed. It shall never be—never be! . . . Who will take her after a heretic! . . . Rejoice, my fair Lord Khabar-Sinskói, in thy stone palace! Rejoice, and thy father too, in his earth hole! Dost thou hear my friend, Vasilii Féodorovitch? We will bow to thee for this bread and salt; we will thank thee for this sweet intoxicating mead. 'Twill give a flip to thy nose even under thy brocade winding-sheet!" . . . (And Mamón laughed a hellish laugh.) "Wherefore speak'st thou not, my son?"

Like a dweller in another world, giving note of his presence among the living only by breaking the rottenness of the grave, the younger Mamón expressed on his countenance neither joy nor sorrow. As usual, his reply to his father's exultation was the hollow cough presageful of the tomb.

"Why dost thou not speak?" repeated the elder Mamón.

"Father, I am dying!" piteously exclaimed his son.

"Die, then—but die rejoicing that they have avenged thee on thy foe!"

Suspecting nothing, knowing nothing, Anastasia thought only of the raptures of love. Even the memory of her father visited her—as a sweet vision. It was not as a corpse in the grave that she imaged him to herself, but alive—with a smile, a blessing; as if he were saying—"Thou see'st, Nastia, I guessed thou lovest Antony; live happy—the blessing of God be with ye!" Kind father; he is now rejoicing among the angels, and delighting in the welfare of his children!

At this very moment the nurse, crying, weep-

ing as if over a corpse, fell at her foster-daughter's feet. "What hath happened?" enquired Anastasia, terrified.

"Ah, my child, thou full of sorrows!" whined the nurse; "they have cast thy bridegroom into the black izba; he was treating the young Tartar Tsarévitch, and he killed him. He must lose his head."

The blow was unexpected. Anastasia trembled and turned pale as death. Without uttering a word, she fell into a kind of deep reverie, fixing her eyes on one object. She seemed turned to stone in her deep thought, and looked like the sculptured emblem of grief. The nurse implored her to return to herself—even shook her; she remained still in her former attitude. Suddenly her eyes flashed out a strange unnatural light; she turned them wildly around, laughed convulsively, and cried—"They have taught thee to say this to mock me; nay, deceive me not! . . . In spite of ye, ye shall not part me from Antony: he is my plighted lord—my love!" . . . Then again she began to think, and fell into her former stony immobility. The nurse was frightened. Whom could she call?—the powers of heaven and the old wise women. They muttered charms over her; they sprinkled her; they read prayers—nothing did any good. They were about to fumigate her, to beat her with a nail, to apply fire to the soles of her feet—with great difficulty she came to herself.

Her brother arrived. Anastasia knew him, and threw herself, weeping, on his neck. "Thou art my dear, my own brother!" was all she could sob out. She did not dare to pronounce her bridegroom's name, much less to ask about him; maiden bashfulness, and more than all, stern custom, forbade her to speak of what was swelling at her heart. She, a maiden, was only permitted to weep for a father or a brother; tears consecrated to any other man, even to a bridegroom, were counted a crime. But in these few words there was so much misery, so much entreaty, that her brother could not but understand about whom Anastasia was thus agonized.

Khabár ordered the nurse and all the other domestics to leave the chamber. When this was done, he began to reprove her for giving way to such despair in the presence of others; he represented to her, that the domestics might conclude unfavourably of her.—"Is it bitter to thee? then man thy heart. Die beneath the lash, but be still: thus hath it ever been with our race," said he to his sister. "But for thee, a maiden, it is more than all forbidden to lament for a bridegroom who hath not yet taken our faith." Having made this paternal remonstrance, he began to caress and console her.—"There is hope of saving Antony. A courier hath been sent to the country to the Prince Khólmiskoi, who hath requested us, in case of any danger to Antony, to let him know by an express. The son of Khólmiskoi is wedded to the Great Prince's daughter. We must be helped both by the voevóda's services and family ties. . . . Khabár's own horses are saddled. He will gallop to Tver to the young Prince Ivan: the prince loves Antony, and will move in his favour. The Princess Helena of Vallachia promises, whatever it may cost, to save the unhappy leech. Powerful men are interested for him,

the favourite of Iván Vassilievitch, the deacon Kouritzin, even the Primate Zosimus. The latter protects Antony, as being a lamb which is now likely to be lost to the flock of Christ. The refining-pot is just prepared to purify him, and they are about to pluck him from it, and hurl him into eternal fire. All have hope of softening Ivan Vassilievitch. And if prayers, interest, and argument cannot succeed, there is yet another means"

This is what the brother communicated to his sister; and Anastasia, convulsively embracing him, implored him to gallop swiftly to Tver. In a few days—namely, on the feast of the Protection of the Holy Virgin—the old woman who prepared the miserable food for the prisoners, had thrown the German in his dungeon the *kalatch*: we know already what it contained. This was managed by Anastasia's nurse. What had it not cost the daughter of Obrazétz to induce her foster-mother to such an exploit! Tears, prostrations, promises of rich gifts and favours for the rest of her life, threats of suicide—all was employed to attain her object. She felt a thousand times easier when she was assured of the fulfilment of her wish. The precious cross was on Antony's breast; it would save him.

The Prince Kholmokoi arrived in haste; his entreaties were joined to those of his daughter-in-law—the daughter of the Great Prince, the letters of Ivan the Young, sent by Khabar, of Helena, of the Primate; many of these persons fell at the feet of the stern ruler—all was in vain. "If I wished it myself I cannot do it," was the Great Prince's answer to them. "I have given my word to Danyar, my friend and servant; I have sworn before the image of our Saviour. Not for mine own son would I go back."

Aristotle and Andriousha he would not see. In order to avoid meeting them he did not leave his palace for several days. The construction of the cathedral was stopped. The artist ordered the Great Prince to be informed, that the church would not be finished till Antony was set free, that it was only at Antony's request that he had begun its construction. Ivan Vassilievitch's sole answer was a gloomy silence.

In the meanwhile they assured Anastasia that all was going well, that there was hope

The friends of the unfortunate prisoner never ceased, however, to make every effort, to employ every means, in their power to save him. In this struggle against man and fate, the most active was the son of Aristotle.

It was sad to see Andriousha! He hardly ate, or drank or slept. They could only force him to strengthen himself with food, by telling him that his exertions were more needed by Antony than those of any one else. He did nothing but wander round the prison of his friend, or round the palace of the Great Prince. Here he watched the coming out of Ivan Vassilievitch, even his looking out from a window; and once he did look out. Then the boy knelt down, bowed to the earth, beat his breast, and pointed to heaven, to the temple of God, to his own tears. What was the reply of Ivan Vassilievitch? He hastily turned away his head.

Wandering day and night around the black izba, like some passionate lover round the

dwelling of his mistress, who is kept by a stern father or cruel guardian under bolt and bar, Andriousha sometimes fancied that, through a crack in one of the bladder panes of the dungeon window, he caught a glimpse of the dear, the precious prisoner. The crevice—he began to remark—grew wider and wider day by day. At last he was able to distinguish through it the lineaments of the face, so well known and so beloved. Then what a moving, eloquent dialogue he carried on by signs with his friend! And who would have cared to hinder this dialogue? Any one that pleased, might wave his head before the black izba, in sign of love to any of the prisoners, since not a hair's-breadth of liberty was added to the captive. Less than all had they any thing to fear from a boy!

And could the good Tveritchanin fail to take a lively interest in Antony's fate—Aphanasii, his delighted fellow-traveller in imagination over the Western lands—his *svat*? He often accompanied the boy in his secret journeys, and with him rejoiced in the communication opened with the dear prisoner. Andriousha succeeded, standing on the old man's shoulders, in observing through the window of the dungeon, that no one was in the cell except the prisoner himself. Then he ventured to thrust his hand through the iron grating and the crevice in the bladder of the window, making him happy with a friendly pressure of the hand, and succeeded in saying to him—"To-morrow is the great day . . . expect me." He had no time to say more, and heard nothing from Antony in reply. Some one entered the dungeon-cage.

Yes, to-morrow was the great day for Antony. His friends knew that the old Tartar Tsarévitch had recovered from the frightful lethargy with which his son's death had overwhelmed him, and that he was ready to demand from Ivan Vassilievitch an exemplary revenge for his boy's head. To-morrow, at all hazards, his victim must be saved.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CATASTROPHE.

"The dim lamp sleepily

'Gan pale before the flush of morning;
Into the dungeon stream'd the morn. The Poet's eye
Raised to the grate a glance unshrinking—
A noise! They come—they call—"Tis they—Prepare to die!"

Hark! bolt and bar and lock is clinking,
They call . . . O stay, O stay! but one day—one day more!"

POUSHKIN—*André Chénier.*

"The great day?" . . . said Antony to himself. "Perhaps the day of pardon, of mercy! . . . Perhaps of death! . . . More likely the latter. The sentences of Ivan are fatal: the thunderbolt, in falling from heaven, turneth not back. Perhaps my friends have determined on saving me? But how? With what sacrifices, under what conditions?"

"May this day be truly great," said he, as he awoke in the morning, and begged to have a priest.

They had the cruelty to refuse; or, what is the same thing, they answered not.

Kouritzin came not for the letters. What

bad hindered him! He would not deceive, if there had been any possibility of coming. He would undermine the foundations of the prison; he would make an entrance even through the chimney, if he could find no other path. Of this Antony was convinced. Was it not then the true reason of his absence, that there was yet hope of the Great Prince's mercy? . . .

Hope! . . . Great God! how did his heart beat at the word, his blood more swiftly rush through his veins! How, at the word, started they from the gloom all the dear ones with caresses, with all the gifts of life, and surround him! O, stay, remain but for a little, beloved visions, at the pillow of the unhappy; help him to forget this day the fetters, the black izba, the groans, of his companions in captivity; enchant him, dear guests, with your caresses, give him yet one festival on earth, perhaps the last, on the threshold of eternity! . . .

No! they had come but for a moment, and instantly vanished, driven away by the agony of uncertainty.

How heavily the hours dragged on till evening!

No one had come. Antony is watching at the window . . .

He listens . . . no one! All is still, as on the confines of the world.

Involuntarily he glanced at the wall . . . By the feeble glimmer of the night-lamp, the fatal names of the wretches whose place he now filled in the dungeon, and who had already vanished from the earth, started from the gloom and struck upon his eye. Eloquent, grave lines! And wherefore should he not erect also a similar memorial of himself? Perhaps a new inmate would soon inhabit that cell, and would read in his turn these lines. He would then be not alone, he would surround himself with the family of his comrades that were no more, and carry on with them a dialogue of the heart.

Antony found a nail, and scratched upon the wall the four words—*liebe Mutter, liebe A.* . . . words of farewell to earth, or, what is the same thing, to those who were dearer than all in the world. When he had written them he melted into tears, as if he was tearing himself from the embrace of his dear mother, his darling bride, whom he was never more to see.

In after days these words attracted the deep attention of the crowned grandson of Ivan, imprisoned in the same cell of the black izba; often sought the ill-fated Dmitrii Ivanovitch the key to these hieroglyphics. It was only the tale-teller Aphonia who could explain them in relating the story of the prisoner. It was not in vain that Antony wrote these four words in his native language; they served as noble funeral games in his memory, performed some years afterwards by the lips of the good old man, and the heart of the young captive, who knew not his own crime.

Suddenly was heard a rustling at the window . . . Antony rushed to it . . . he listens . . . Some one is cautiously clambering up the wall . . . an eye gleamed at the crevice in the window, and then the eye was succeeded by a little hand. It held a file and a folded paper. Antony seized both the one and the other, concealed the file in his bosom, and read with difficulty, in terrible agitation, the following lines, which

fluttered and wavered before his eyes:—"Tomorrow they are to give up thy head to the Tartars. This night thou must escape. File through the iron grating; the guard will not hinder thee. Through the window, and to the Mill of Zaneplinnaia! A horse and guide await thee there. From him wilt thou receive arms and money. Further on, on the road, the Prince Kholmsskoi and Khabar have posted in various spots their men and horses. They will conduct thee to the Lithuanian frontier. Save thyself by flying to thy country. Farewell, dear, ever loved friend! Remember that there are in Russia those who love thee well—O, how well!—and will only be happy when they hear that thou art happy: forget not, too, thy little friend Andréi. God grant thee time and means to escape! Till then I cannot be at rest. Once more farewell, dear Antony!"

The soul of the captive was filled with light; joy gleamed in his eyes. He again felt the fresh air, he saw the fields, the sky, all so bright, so wide, so boundless . . . But hardly had flitted by the first moments of rapture, awakened by the thought of escape, of liberty, than selfishness gave place to another feeling. Whither should he fly? To Bohemia. True, there he would find fatherland, safety, his dear-loved mother; but would he find that which was the ornament of his life—would he find Anastasia? What would become of him without her? He would die of grief. And here, at Moscow, what would be the consequences of his escape? Would not the prison-guards suffer—the retainers? Perhaps, and his friends as well? For him there would be executions; innocent blood would be shed. No, no! never would he consent to sacrifice to his own safety, not his friends only, but even his fellow-creatures, even the humblest of the prison-guards. No man should suffer for him. The Lord had judged him; he would drink his cup alone.

On one side the world called him to itself; on the other a sublime, a Christian feeling commanded him not to hearken to this enchanting call. His head seemed full of fire, his heart died within him . . . But he must decide . . . He did.

His first act was to burn Andriousha's letter. He did not give him back the file, not to pain him too suddenly, but he hastily wrote on a scrap of paper—"I know what fate may overwhelm those to whom my head is confided. God and my conscience forbid me to profit by the means of safety which they propose to me. I might escape, but my fellow-creatures would be ruined. I thank my friends. I thank thee, dear Andriousha. The remembrance of your friendship will sweeten my last moments. Farewell, I embrace you all fondly, fondly. There, also, I shall be near you." Having written these lines, and seized the letters which he had prepared for his mother, he coughed at the crevice of the window. "What wouldst thou?" spoke a well-known voice. "Thy hand," he answered. The little hand again appeared at the crevice. Antony pressed it to his lips, and placed in it his missives. In receiving what given, Andriousha felt tears dropping on his fingers. "What could they mean?" thought he, with a sinking of the heart; and, seizing the hand of his friend, he hastened in his turn to

cover it with kisses, and then descended from the shoulders of the good Tveritchánin, who now, as before, served him as a living ladder. The enigma which tortured him, was solved at home by the light of the fire.

In order not to fall into temptation, Antony threw the file out of the window—the last instrument of escape! . . . It is finished! . . .

Almost the whole night the captive passed in prayer. It was sad to leave this world; but the thought that he would put off this earthly vesture in purity—that love and friendship would conduct him with such sincere, such living devotion—lightened to his soul the path of the cross.

At midnight he began to doze. He fancied that he heard as in a dream a sobbing at his window. (This was the sobbing of Andriousha, who had read the captive's answer.) But Antony was so uninterruptedly, so sweetly weighed down with sleep, that he had no strength to resist it, and he slumbered on his rugged couch till dawn.

Suddenly . . . he hears a noise, a bustle . . . "Where is the Almayne?" shouts a voice in bad Russian—"The Great Prince hath given us his head. Give up the Almayne."

And immediately after there thronged into the cell a number of Tartars, athletes in stature, their eyes glaring with rage; they rushed upon him, threw him down, and, placing their knees on his back, bound his hands behind him.

"Twas a needless violence! Antony resisted not."

"I will go whither ye will," said he, firmly; "I only ask one thing in the name of your father, of your mother. Kill me speedily, torture me not."

"For a dog, a dog's death!" cried the Tartars: "thou hadst no mercy on our Tsarévitch."

"Take that for my nephew!"

"And that for my kinsman!"

"And this for our Tsarévitch!"

And blows hailed on the unhappy victim, struck at random: one beat him with his fist, another with the handle of his knife.

Around the prison were assembled a multitude of Tartars on horseback, and on foot. They greeted the captive with insults, with cries, with laughter. Thus does the company of Satan receive its victim at the gates of hell.

The horrible procession moved along the riverside, by the Great Street, towards the bridge over the Moskva. Crowds of people began to join in behind it. It might have been expected that the mob would add its insults to those with which the Tartars received their unhappy victim; on the contrary, the Russians, beholding the youth, the beauty, the noble mien of Antony, and hearing that he had been about to take the Russian faith, pitied him, and reproached the Tartars; many women wept.

Near the Konstantino-Yelenoffskii gate, the Prince Kholmiskii, Aristotle, and Khabar encountered the procession. They rushed up to the leaders and offered them a rich ransom to set free their captive. The friends of Antony were joined by a young and beautiful woman; she offered in contribution a chain of gold, bracelets, and other female ornaments. This was Haidée.

Some of the Tartars were shaken by these offers; but the kinsmen of Karakatelia would not relent. At last the friends of the unfortunate prisoner, by increasing their bribes, could only induce them to delay the execution a few moments longer.

They still expected mercy from Ivan Vassilievitch. Andriousha had gone to him; Kouritzin had promised at all hazards to admit Andriousha to the Great Prince.

In order, in case of pardon, the sooner to communicate it to the executioners of the punishment, Khabar had galloped to the Konstantino-Yelenoffskaia street; there he awaited the messenger. Aristotle in the mean time had forced his way up to the condemned captive, and was consoling and comforting him.

Kouritzin had kept his word—Andriousha was already at the ruler's feet, embracing them, covering them with tears. At first he could not utter a word.

How changed was the Great Prince's little favourite since he last had seen him! Where was the bloom of his face, the sparkle of his eyes! All this was gone; instead, was exhaustion and the paleness of the grave; his eyes were sunk, his face was convulsed, his lips parched, as if they were crusted with earth.

"What wouldst thou?" asked the Prince, touched in spite of himself.

"Mercy, O my Lord! pardon Antony the leech," said Andriousha in a voice in which all his soul was poured forth. "God sc'e'th, he is not guilty; some wicked men changed the medicine. I know him: I will answer for him, he would never do a wicked deed. Have mercy upon him, my Tsar, my father! Be generous! I will be thy bond-slave until the grave. Make of me what thou wilt, architect, stonehewer, day-labourer: whatever thou wilt, I will be all for thee. I will serve thee as a faithful slave while I have a drop of blood remaining. Employ me in whatever work thou wilt; in war, in death; put me in Antony's place, but only have mercy upon him. I will for ever pray to God for thee."

In aid of the eloquent intercessor came Sophia Phomínishna from another chamber, whence she heard the piteous prayer, which tore her soul; and she began urgently to implore the Great Prince to show pity on the leech. At this moment she remembered not her grudge against Antony for insulting her brother, Andréi Phomitch.

"'Tis well," said the sovereign deeply touched; "I accord ye the life of Antony the leech. Kouritzin," he added, turning to his deacon, "send the guards in my name to liberate the leech from the Tartars, and call Danyar to me. Haply I may bend him."

Andriousha shrieked for joy . . . he arose . . . again fell at the feet of Ivan Vassilievitch, kissed them, and, swifter than lightning, flew from the palace of the Great Prince. The dvorétkoi, who tried to stop him in the passage, he hurled prostrate. Forgetting where was his hat, he rushed, with uncovered head, like a madman, along square and street.

In the Konstantino-Yelenoffskaia street, Khabar was no longer to be seen . . . Had they already? . . .

Andriousha's heart died within him. Ago-

nized with terror, panting for breath, he fell . . . he struggled to breath, arose . . . again rushed on, and again fell . . . he tried to shout, but his voice was dried up, and uttered only unintelligible sounds; he tried to crawl on, but could not . . . Strength, life, had left him. He dashed himself upon the frozen earth; he seemed to be wrestling for life and death . . . and at length he fell exhausted in a swoon.

In this condition he was found by Aristotle, himself almost in a state of frenzy.

"It is too late!" he cried in a death-like voice, raising his dying son, throwing him on his shoulder, and carrying him away,—himself he knew not whither. With this burden he wandered about like a shadow, groping his way by the houses and the fences. Some one who knew them, took pity upon them, and led them home.

Yes, it was too late. They had seen the Tsarévitch Danyar galloping to his people, raging at them, and giving stern order to finish the horrid sacrifice; they had seen the Tartars drag Antony from the bank under the bridge on the ice of the frozen river; they had seen Antony bow to the people; when freed from his bonds he crossed himself, pressed something to his bosom, and then the Tartar . . . lifting him high triumphantly, by the thick, bright curls of the fair head . . .

And the sun at that very moment so brightly shone in heaven!

Having collected the remains of the dead, Khabar and the Tveritchanin Aponia buried them at night near the "court of the Antonoff, behind Saint Lazarus."

And it was for this that Antony Ehrenstein had come to Russia! And it was, too, that he might leave the following just and honourable lines about himself in history—"The leech Antony the Almayne did come hither (in 1485) to y^e Grete Prince; the said Anton was held in grete honour of the Grete Prince; in showing his craft upon Karakatcha, Tsarevitch Danyar, he slew the aforesaid with poison, killing him for a jest. And the prince thereupon did give him up to 'the Tartares' . . . and they took the said leech to the river of Moskva, under the bridge, in wynter, and did there cutte hys throte with there knyves, like a shepe."

And what became of Anastasia? Day by day in her eyes and in her soul it grew darker and darker, until all was melted into one dreadful gloom. Antony incessantly appeared before, and called her to himself.

"I come, I come—my love, my husband!" she cried in her frenzy.

She languished awhile, pining and withering away; at last madness fired her soul . . . she laid hands on herself.

Ask me not how this was.

You know by history that the execution of the leech threw into violent terror all the foreigners dwelling in Moscow; that Aristotle was about to fly to his own country; that the Great Prince "took him, plundered him, and imprisoned him in the court of Antonoff, behind Sanct Lazarus;" that the artist performed his vow—finished the Cathedral of the Annunciation of the Holy Virgin. But what afterwards became of him and his son—where they directed their steps, you can nowhere discover. In vain your

heart enquires where lies their dust . . . God knows!"

'Tis sad, 'tis very sad!

You certainly do not ask me what was Khabar-Simskoi's future fate. Well known to the heart of every Russian must be the liberation of Nijnii-Nóvgorod from our foes; the saving of our honour at Riazan, besieged by the Tartars in the time of Vassilii Ivanovitch; and other exploits of this renowned voevoda.

We have forgotten to say, that on the day of Antony's execution was born Ivan's grandson, Dmitrii Ivanovitch.

We think it necessary to add, in concluding our tale, that the place of the leech Antony at the court of the Great Prince was supplied, at Poppel's recommendation, by Master Leon, a Jew by birth; that this master treated and *effectually cured* Ivan the Young, and was for this crime publicly executed on the Bolvanoffka, beyond the river Moskva. At this no one was sorry: well did the villain deserve his torments.

Let us now change the scene to Germany.

Poppel, on returning to his sovereign's court, hastened to gratify his uncle with the news of his namesake's death. "Wretch!" cried the baron, driven almost to frenzy: "he was my son. I am his murderer. I curse thee and myself!"

He hastened to relate to every one the story of Antony's birth and of his own wickedness. Soon a monastery received him in its walls. At the same monastery there afterwards arrived another seeker for retirement: this was Antonio Fioraventi. We may judge what was their first meeting. Yet long they continued to meet, day after day, in the passages of the monastery; they bowed humbly to each other, and hastened to wash away, at the foot of the cross, with tears of deep remorse, the blood of the innocent victim with which they were stained.

I met with one person, the irritable critic of every thing and every body; a tall, withered, dried-up old fellow, who asked me why I had not explained to Antony, before his death, that he was the baron. "What for?" asked I.

"Why, he would have died easier," was the reply.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AGAIN IN BOHEMIA.

"Play we to an end our play, sing our song out while we may."

You remember, doubtless, the castle by the White Mountain, on the bank of the Elbe, though it is long since we left it. Here, in rather less than three years since we were there, let us again enter the court-yard belonging to this poor castle.

A lovely day of autumn—remember, in Bohemia—is already inclining towards evening, and throws its rosy veil over sky, over stream—over all things. And the castle is all glowing with the blaze, as though there were a festival there. All creation, penetrated by a kind of balmy quietness, breathes soft, and light, and low. In the courtyard of the castle, a majestic elm, still beautiful, though old age and autumn have despoiled it of its ornaments, has drawn toward itself a young vine, which firmly em-

braces it, twines in wanton wreaths around its branches, and adorns it with its clusters warily glowing in the last rays of the sun. On one of the boughs is suspended a cradle, all nested in flowers. An aged man, white-haired, tall, withered, with tender assiduity is rocking it, seated on a stool. But the infant has begun to cry, and the old man hastens to draw back the curtains, takes the baby in his arms, dandles and nurses it till the mother comes. Now a young woman takes the sweet burden from the male nurse, sits down also beneath the elm, and begins to feed it from the breast. Her glances gaze now at the child with love, then with tenderness they meet two dear beings who have approached the elm, and stopped at a short distance. One—a tall, handsome, blooming peasant or farmer, (judging by his dress, which is distinguished from that of a peasant by some shades of taste;) the other—a child of two years old. Between these two a struggle is going on, and the mother guesses that the victory will remain on the side of the latter. The child, all flushed and rosy, is trying with all his might to drag along the spade which the young peasant has brought from his labour in the fields. The father wishes to let him have his way, but, at the same time, he is afraid that the load, above his strength, may hurt the boy. At last a peace is made; the boy is to do as he likes—he drags along the spade, but the father ties his garter to it, on which is supported the whole weight of the tool. This contest and victory singularly amuses the old man and the young woman. All this picture is coloured with the rosy liquid light of sunset.

Hail, old friends, Yan, Yakoubék and Lioubousha! But your family has increased. Every thing proves that ye live contented and happy. Ye have not sought this happiness beyond the sea; ye have found it around yourselves. God be praised, ye know not even the name of the passions! Your blood has never boiled with them; your hearts have never been rent in pieces by them; their hellish tortures have never deprived you of food, of sleep, nor agonized your imagination with threatening phantoms. God be praised! Peace and blessedness shall never depart even from your graves! "Here rest the good," will say the neighbours who knew ye, as they point to your turf, and the traveller will remember ye with a blessing.

The young woman, having suckled her infant, puts him back in the cradle, and the old man again applies himself to lull it to sleep. A table is spread beneath the elm; soon the evening meal is ready. But before they sit down to it, all the family piously say a prayer; and the child, repeating after his mother, lisps a thanksgiving to God for its daily bread. They take their seats; Lioubousha alone delays to sit down. She strains her glances on the neighbouring mountain, along which winds the road leading to the castle, and seems to follow with her eyes some moving object.

"What art thou hunting for there, Lioubousha?" asked Yakoubek. "Is it the cow that has strayed? Here's a job for me, just as it was last year . . . she will give me work till night!"

"No," answered the young woman, "there

is a traveller creeping along the mountain; an old man . . . yes, I can see he is very weary. Shall we not wait for him?"

Yakoubek made a penthouse over his eyes with his hand, and after a short pause exclaimed—"It is a traveller! By his dress, it is clear he doth not belong to these parts. Well, we will wait for him."

They covered up the milk from the flies, quickened the impatience of the boy with a slice of bread, and began to await the wayfarer. But as he crept along with difficulty, the young woman went to meet him, welcomed him with friendly words, and taking him by the hand helped him on quicker to the elm.

The traveller's dress was not German, and he spoke a language which, though intelligible to the Bohemians, was not Tchekh. The old man, before he bowed to his host, made several signs of the cross before an image placed in a small cavity of the elm, which highly pleased the pious Bohemians.

They seated him in the place of honour, and welcomed him as well as they could both with bodily food and kindness. Soon the whole family took a great fancy to the old man. And even the little son of Yakoubek, who was two years old, and had been at first afraid of him, probably because he had only one eye, in a short time crept up to him, and began to ask for his staff to ride on horseback upon.

And there was an important reason why the inhabitants of the castle should love the traveller—he was a Russian; he had come from Moscow. You have guessed, that it was the Tveritchanin, Aphanasii Nikitin. He had travelled to the countries towards the rising of the sun; he had desired also to visit those which lay at his setting, and here . . . he had come . . . It is true it was not curiosity alone that attracted him to Bohemia; he bore to Antony's mother one of the letters from the departed.

"When they learned that the traveller was a Russian, Yan, Yakoubék, and Lioubousha overwhelmed him with questions about their young master. "Good heaven! from Russia, from Moscow!" said they; "if we had known that we should receive so welcome a guest, we would have gone to meet thee at Lipetsk, and brought thee hither in our arms!"

But the traveller, before he answered their multitudinous questions, himself asked them where was the boyarinia, the mother of his young lord, Antony.

"There!" answered Yan, pointing to heaven.

The old man crossed himself with piety, and cried,—"Glory be to God! . . . I was about to bring her news of her son . . . but they have already met, already spoken to each other."

The tidings of their young master's death deeply touched the good inhabitants of the tower. They remembered the beauty of his person, his noble heart, his last visit to the castle, distinguished by various deeds of charity; they blessed him for the happiness which he had procured for the whole family; they remembered their young lord's departure for Muscovy . . .

"As if he had foreseen that he would never come back," said Yakoubék, interrupting his words with sobs; "'who knoweth whether we

shall ever meet again!" he said at Lipetsk, when I attended him there It was not for nothing that my heart died away! I should have liked to have seen him but once more! I think I could have borne it better!"

"Thanks be to God that the Lady Baroness died before him," said Yan, "or how she would have suffered, poor lady, at her end!"

"But when did the boyarinia finish her life?" asked the traveller.

"It will soon now be two years," replied Yan. "She was well and calm gay, I cannot say; for gay I had not seen her since a long, a very long time Suddenly, without any cause, she began to mourn, she became thoughtful, she grew unquiet thou seest, good man, this must have been caused by some bad dream about her son 'It is not in vain,' she said; 'something, yes, something bad hath happened to him.' I reasoned with her as far as my poor wit would go, or rather my love and devotion to her; and sent Father Laurence to her with the Church's consolations. No, the gracious lady insisted on one thing—that some harm had happened to her son. She faded, faded away, and took to her bed.

But one day, in the morning, they brought her through the Jew Zakharia—perhaps thou knowest him or hast seen him in Russia—lo they brought her a letter from my young lord! You should have seen what happened with her then! Before, she could hardly lift her hand, but then she herself arose in bed, and began to press the letter to her heart and weep. Oh, those were tears, such as God grant we may weep in the other world! She called us all around her, and showed the letter to us; joy

gleamed in her eyes, and her cheeks glowed just like a young maiden's. Then she dressed herself in her best clothes: there were the sables, too, that my Lord Antony gave her—and sent for Father Laurence to read the letter. And he read to her how happily our young lord was living, and how he was loved by his young beautiful wife, and how the Lord King of Muscovy covered him with his favour. Well, goodman, she could not long bear such extremity of joy . . . in three days she rendered up her soul to God. And in dying, she ever held the letter to her bosom. So they buried her with it."

The traveller's heart was swelling as he listened to this tale; often did he wipe away with the back of his hand the tears that rolled down in spite of him, one after the other. He did not undeceive the inhabitants of the poor castle with regard to Antony's welfare: he would not take so great a sin upon his soul. On the contrary, he endeavoured to paint in still fairer colours the happy life of the court physician in Russia, and added that he had only recently died. But as he recounted all this, he could not refrain from weeping

He passed two weeks enjoying the hospitality of his new friends, as if he were in his own family; he desired at first to go yet further to the West, but he went not—some mournful remembrance drew him back to Russia.

The inhabitants of the tower conducted him on his way, as if they were escorting once more their young lord on his road to Russia. Long they stood at the cross-road, till he had altogether vanished from their sight; long continued the talk about him in the happy family.

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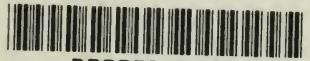
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